

Harpenden Arrows Annual General Meeting

Date: 4th February 2013 – 7.30pm

Venue: British Legion Club, Harpenden

Committee Members/Officers:

Colin Wareham – Chairman (CW)

Graham Harper – Events/Races (GH)

Karen Wilkins – Membership Secretary (KS)

Sarah Dumbrill – Social Secretary (SD)

Ian Smart – Treasurer (IS)

Andy Wilkins – Secretary (AW)

Jenny Birch – Kit Secretary (JB)

Tina Pigeon – New Members Induction (TP)

Simon Spiers – Mens Captain (SS)

Louise Crosby – Ladies Captain (LC)

1. Chairman's introduction

CW welcomed everyone to the meeting, gave an overview of the club's activities and successes in the last year, explained the format of the meeting and thanked everyone for their input and support of the club.

2. Secretary's report - Andy Wilkins

1. Club affiliations

a) ARC – Association of Running Clubs

- Set up for clubs and associations whose principle activity is road, XC, fell or trail running or walking (all non stadia disciplines)
- Provides civil liability policy with specialist sports brokers Perkins Slade Limited, this is especially important if a club is hosting its own race.
- Cost to Harpenden Arrows is reasonable, only £121 per annum.
- Main benefit - affiliation gives a £2 discount on most races.
- Affiliation means that the committee can get advice and guidance on matters relevant to your club activities.

b) EA – England Athletics

- Is the national governing body of athletics.
- Provides the following advantages for clubs;
- Funding programme to benefit affiliated clubs
- Club support

- Insurance
 - Subsidised training for club members
 - Visits to club from expert coaches
 - Club member welfare and CRB checks
 - Resource and training programmes
 - National championships
 - Seminars and conferences for coaches, athletes and volunteers
 - Licensed coach programmes for coaches, teachers and officials
 - Specialist conferences and technical workshops
- Cost to the club is negligible, £50 per annum.
- Individual membership £10 required to get discount on some races like Fred Hughes 10, Silverstone 10k, Silverstone HM and St Neots HM.
- The greater the number of individual members the greater the benefit to the club, for example more flying visits from EA Coaches.

2. Club Training and development

- The Club League is now up and running following a successful trial in 2012. You will hear more about this later from Simon and Louise.
- Viddy and Tina have or are about to attend the EA run leaders course.
- Club standards is still very much alive as we will hear later from Graham, the intention is to continue with this regardless of participation or not in the Club League and as many of you know the standards are WAVA age related scores that reward times in relation to the world record for that distance.
- Club nights are becoming ever more popular which is a fantastic endorsement of what we are doing at the club. As most of you can attest to we have been providing a little more variety to our training by providing regular hill and speed work training which has been expertly led by Louise, David and Simon. Our plans in 2013 are to continue with a published diary of varied training runs on club nights that will still include hill training and speed work but will also be complemented by longer slower 6 mile runs, fartlek sessions and circuit training in the summer.
- Club events that we held in 2012 will be continuing in 2013, as some of you will remember we had talks from our local Osteopath Chris Eke, a session from the Head Coach at the Serpentine running club and nutritional advice from an SIS representative. We plan to continue in a similar vein in 2013 and broaden the appeal by offering advice to cater for all experience levels of our runners. More on this in the very near future.

3. Election of new Club Secretary

CW thanked AW for his contribution to the club, explained the nomination process and confirmed that Michael Hessey's nomination had been verified in accordance with the club's constitution and welcomed Michael to the new post.

4. Treasurer's report - Ian Smart

Income and Expenditure Report for the year ended 31 December 2012

Income	£	Notes
Membership subscriptions	2,070	1
Club vests and shirts	1,505	2
Running events	1,320	3
Social events	<u>2,523</u>	4
Total income	<u>7,418</u>	
Expenditure		
Venue rental	950	5
IT & website	307	
Race fees, coaching fees and affiliations	751	
Logo design and new signage	324	
Sundries	77	
Club vests and shirts	1,584	2
Running events	1,413	3
Social events	<u>2,559</u>	4
Total expenditure	<u>7,965</u>	
Net deficit for the year	<u>547</u>	

Notes

- 1 Includes new joiners and renewals.
- 2 Stock of two items held at the year end. Small loss on unit price of each item sold.
- 3 Club covered cost of one half bedroom hire in Florence
- 4 Social events are planned to break even. Social event expenditure includes consumables for club nights. Overall, there was a net deficit of £36 on social events.
- 5 As used for club nights at St George's

Cash at bank and in hand at 31 December 2012 was £2,936.

5. Membership Secretary's report - Karen Wilkins

- 116 paid up members out of 252 in all
- 68 male | 48 female
- 2007 – 24 | 2008 – 44 | 2009 – 50 | 2010 – 47 | 2011 – 43 | 2012 - 42

Last year our club continued to grow with similar numbers to 2011. We had 42 new joiners and by the end of 2012 we had 116 paid up members. Interest in the club has been driven in part by New Years resolutions, as a result of word of mouth plus some great publicity from newspaper articles and flyers, and I'd like to thank Joolz for all her hard work on this.

In a similar vein we also saw people drop out of the club as they moved away from the area or other personal circumstances. We have 68 men and 48 women and members across all the age groups, but we're particularly strong in the MV40 category (18 men) and FV35 category (10 women). People join Harpenden Arrows with different goals - whether it's the social side of running they're after or some friendly competitive rivalry to push themselves a little bit farther.

Our club attendance has improved on last year and on a club night we now often have between 30 and 40 people turning up on a Tuesday and around 20 on a Thursday. The improved club night organisation and the different training sessions we've introduced such as hill work and speed work have no doubt contributed to this rise.

We now have a good active base of runners and as a result attendance at cross country and other local races are higher than ever. This year we've introduced England Athletics affiliation to give our members additional benefits should they choose to sign up. Since renewals started we've had 15 members sign up.

Another change introduced last year was providing more support to new members. We now make sure we meet and greet all new members and spend time with them after their first run to tell them about the club whilst answering any questions and reassuring them. Tina Pidgeon, who looks after New Members Induction, with the help of Collette Pidgeon take many of the new members in their group. Their patience and encouragement is invaluable and much appreciated. Last year they introduced a monthly 5 mile try out run, to encourage those in the 4 mile group to push themselves and see if they could run further. This has had positive feedback and resulted in people moving into the regular 5 mile group on club nights.

Looking forward to this year, we hope to continue to grow our base membership as people leave the club. Although still a fairly small club in comparison to others in Hertfordshire, the current club size gives us a great advantage in that it remains manageable and can continue to operate through St George's.

Finally the question often comes up about letting children attend the club. This requires a great deal of organisation and strict following of government guidelines and checks that have to be undertaken, especially now that we are part of the EA. We are therefore keeping the club for over 18s only this year.

In summary - we can't survive as a club without members and therefore we'll continue to work to bring new members in whilst trying to keep our existing members happy! So if anyone has any further ideas on membership then feel free to ask questions at the end.

6. Kit Secretary's report – Jenny Birch

Our new club logo was designed early in 2012 following our name change and last year's AGM. Karen, myself, Joolz and Jo finalised a short list of logo designs after several options were designed by our resident artist Jo Wood. The final design was agreed with the whole committee. We would like to take this opportunity to formally thank Jo for all the hard work she put into the logo design. We believe that the logo is easy to read and has a dynamism that is very appropriate for a running club that is growing and becoming increasingly successful and the running figure reflects our focus on people rather than just running and the sociable aspects of the club.

While the logo was being designed we investigated several different kit suppliers using a variety of sources such as searching the internet, studying the kit our competitors were wearing at local races and also contacting some other clubs to enquire as to their experiences with different suppliers.

I narrowed the selection down to 2 suppliers and obtained some sample running vests for the committee to reach a final decision. We decided on Ron Hill Specials. Once costings were confirmed the first order was arranged in June. I was very pleased with the large response to the first order.

First order (including 4 spare vests not pre-ordered by specific members)

38 male vests 38 sold
26 female vests 25 sold

17 male T-shirts 16 sold
12 female T-shirts 12 sold

I will be emailing around an order form shortly for further vest and T-shirt orders. We plan to stick to 2 orders a year as there are cost savings related to order size. We will order a few more spare vests than we did with the first order as we now know the most popular sizes (small for women and medium/large for men).

Costs for 2012 were £15 for a vest and £20 for a T-shirt. We plan to keep these costs the same as long as the supplier has not increased their prices. We also hope to add the option of red Hoodies with the Arrows logo on the front (similar to the ones we wore in Florence).

Florence Marathon

2012 was our 3rd 'Away' marathon. This time Florence was our destination. There was only the option of a full marathon but we still had 22 of us head out to Florence for a sunny weekend in November. We ended up with 16 runners and 6 much appreciated supporters. Despite multiple interruptions to our training schedules due to injuries, illness and life events we all completed the 26 miles and 4 members very successfully completed their first ever marathons.

While we were there we enjoyed 2 organised large group meals, one pre-marathon to 'carb-load' and the other as a post-marathon celebration. Thanks again to Jo who (through her Italian cousin's contacts) managed to find us a fabulous restaurant for our post-marathon celebratory meal. The meal and restaurant were wonderful and we were very well looked after.

We all stayed in one hotel (the Hotel River), the hotel staff were very helpful throughout the whole process and the hotel could not have been more convenient to the start and finish points of the marathon.

After the AGM the committee will decide upon our destination for 2013. We plan to pick somewhere where there are options for people who want to run but don't feel they want to commit to a full marathon. We also want a destination we can fly to from Luton as this does make it a lot more convenient.

7. Social Secretary's report - Sarah Dumbrill

Alongside, the usual club 5k socials at the Engineer, we've had meals at a couple of pubs after our local 10k races, the birthday bash, two organised meals for the away team in Florence, and our Christmas party!

Firstly, thanks to Louise for coordinating the 5k socials on the last Thursday of each month with the Engineer which continue to have a good turn out.

We had a turn out of 29 Arrows and their partners at the White Horse after the Wheathampstead 10k and 30 turned up to the Gibraltar Castle after the Herts 10k.

Around 50 Arrows and their families came to our summer bash in mid-July. It was a successful family party at James Benthall's beautiful home. The rain thankfully held off so the children (& a few oversized big kids too) could enjoy the outdoor trampoline and swimming pool. For our summer party everyone brought along a dish to contribute to a delicious spread and add to the community feel that I believe epitomises the ethos of our club. A huge thank you to James and the rest of his family for their hospitality, this event took a considerable amount of organisation but I personally loved it, and there were faces present who may not normally be able to make it to our social events. I would really welcome feedback from members whether they would like a similar family event in the calendar for later in 2013.

A big thank you to Jenny for the slick organisation of our away marathon this year, all staying together in one hotel with its sociable and comfortable lobby area meant our away team could relax and enjoy spending time together. I would also like to make special mention to Jo Wood who, with the help of her cousin, organised the most amazing post-race meal I have ever had, in the beautiful Piazza Vittorio. This perfectly rounded off our most successful Away Marathon to date.

The final event of the year was the Christmas Dinner Dance at the Harpenden House Hotel. The venue was a little more expensive than previous years but the advantage was it could easily house our expanding numbers; we could enjoy the late bar and spend out evening in one place. In many other venues we would have been restricted to one sitting. The evening seemed to pass very quickly and I hope everyone had fun.

I personally would like feedback going forward. It is getting increasingly difficult to think up new ideas where to hold our socials especially as numbers get larger. Any suggestions are gratefully received and I would appreciate people sharing their thoughts of what social events they would like to see in the calendar for this and future years.

For the coming year I am intending to organise a meal after the Wheathampstead and Herts 10ks, a summer party and the Christmas do again. If there are any members that would like to organise an additional social event to these then please do let me know. I am happy to help with any queries you might have about how to go about organising and arranging the event if you need.

I will be holding a social planning meeting after club night run at St Georges next Tuesday 12th where any members who would like to come and talk about plans for the coming year are welcome to join me to discuss costing, events and venues. Additionally if there is any one who might like to be a helper for organising some of the socials then please let me know as it would be great to have someone else on board to give me a hand with help researching venues and organisation if needed. If you might be interested but you can't make next Tuesday then please email me with any thoughts and suggestions you have and I hope to see some of you there.

8. Club Information Officer report - Graham Harper

Once again during the last year club runners have competed in a wide range of events from one end of the country to the other – and beyond. The club has grown and we have had successes at all sorts of events from 5k to Marathons. Some of us have also been involved in some slightly different events too – triathlons, off road events, mud runs and 24 hour endurance events.

As we've already heard, we sent 16 runners to Florence to run the marathon and achieved some fantastic results both from experienced marathon runners and marathon first timers – congratulations to them and many thanks again to Jenny for all her hard work in organising this.

Congratulations to all our runners who have achieved their own individual targets this year – whatever they are. It's not all just about running marathons and as a club we will continue to aim to be a sociable running club. We will however continue to encourage people to have a go at events that they might not have ever thought they could do.

As a club we continue to achieve some good results in local events too and we have frequently beaten other local, larger clubs.

Our two club captains have made a significant contribution to the club this year and we will be hearing a bit more from them shortly about our successes in the cross country league and our own club league which is helping us to focus on local events where we can do well. More from the club captains later.

We've made some changes to the club website and also to communications. We are aware there have been some problems with the emailing system – but all of the emails sent to members are now archived and available on the website. We will be continuing to develop the website over the year, hopefully adding some routes and training plans. For those of you haven't been to the website lately you may not know that registered members can now submit content directly to the site, and of course I would welcome any contributions from members for articles and information which might be useful to the club.

It's been a great year. We now have club kit, a race feather and the website all carrying the same Arrows branding which looks fantastic. – Many thanks again to Jo, Karen, Jules and Jenny who have done a brilliant job on this

Thanks also to Jules who, as you have probably noticed, gets us into the local papers on a regular basis now.

9. Club Captains report – Simon Spiers and Louise Crosby

Cross Country

We have been impressed with the continued support for the cross country and of course amazed that we walked away with the Men's Masters at the Sunday League and then at the Herts County Champs in the 2011/2012 season. Not quite so strong this year for the Men's masters, although currently in 2nd place, but all the Ladies teams certainly doing very well in 1st and 2nd positions and the Men's A and B teams in 3rd and 1st respectively. This is fantastic for only our 2nd year in the League. This is a principally a team event, but individuals can also do well and we have potentially another winner of the SW ladies (Hannah following Camilla last year) and now 3 ladies potentially in the top 5 in the W35 category. There have been lots of strong performances everywhere and just happy that we are getting nearly 30 people to each of the races. Is there anything else we could do to encourage people to come along? In the long term we may be asked to host an event - but I don't think that we are there just yet for location or logistics support. Any ideas are welcome.

The Arrows League

Pleased that the trial went well and it seems to have caught a number of people's attention. We've tried to listen to people and believe now that we have a good balance across a range of races and events and method of scoring. We won't please everyone all the time, but we've included:

- 1) a selection of half-marathons that can count, which will appeal to a lot of you,
- 2) the club 5k to encourage further participation as a runner or marshal
- 3) the Thunder run..... a UK team-based event where our families can also all be involved.

Whilst the 2013 league is a blend of attendance and competitive placings, the information that we will be compiling could enable us to look at potential rankings across different formats in future years. Just got to remember that it is still just for fun!

The CaptainsSlog

We launched our monthly newsletter in 2013 and, although there are some problems with our email distribution to some accounts, you should all be receiving it somehow. We have tried to get a balance of race reports, promoting future events and interesting snippets.

Do people like it? Is mid-month (just pre-Club 5k a good time to do it? We would certainly welcome race reports and contributions (as we had from Ian Long, Viddy and Andy Wilkins during the year.)

The Club 5k

We have seen good attendance at the 5k over the last few months with 17-20 runners turning up. This is a great improvement on the 7 or 8 we have seen in the past. It has been great to see new and not so new faces.

This year we had to contend with the crop trials at Rothamstead which meant we had to change our summer route to the Nickey Line. This seemed a popular course as it is more sociable and easier to follow (and much easier to marshal) so we would be interested in feedback on whether we should stick to this route this summer.

Appreciate that the winter route has a few problems with dark and tight corners - have increased the marshalling requirement and hope that has made it better. As always, welcome suggestions on alternatives. Have also tried to start the races on time to reduce the waiting time of the faster runners, but it is still work in progress.

A big thank you to those who come and marshal, as this event could not be held without you. Particular thanks to Georgie who is now a pro with the finishing numbers. The club 5k is in the Club League this year, for runners and marshals, so I hope members will continue to support it.

2013 Plans

We hope to try and establish a database of members' race times so that we can celebrate their successes over different distances. At present, this information is only captured in Fetch for the few runners who have registered. We encourage others to sign up or to email the Captains with achievements.

10. Presentation of Club Standard Awards – Graham Harper and Colin Wareham

GH and CW handed out awards to those that had submitted their achievements in accordance with the criteria for bronze, silver, gold, platinum and full house.

GH and CW handed out certificates to the joint winners of the 2012 trial club league; Simon, Viddy and Karen.

11. Questions and feedback

CB asked about drop off rates for members who don't continue with the club, KW advised that there were many reasons that members do not continue but that contact is maintained and feedback requested where possible so that drop off's can be reduced.

LS advised that one potential member was put off by the website that she thought indicated that the club was too competitive for her. LS suggested that the club hold a "New members evening".

LS asked if there was a maximum number of members that could be catered for, KW stated that there was no set maximum but that we were not looking to expand exponentially as this would mean increasing committee numbers and potentially moving from our current meeting location.

JS asked if it would be possible to set up a twitter account, it was agreed that this was a good idea and should be put in motion.

Discussion took place following questions raised about hosting our own race or becoming involved in the St George's curry run. Lee Scott, Steve Bowran, Clive Borthwick and Simon Townsend to form a working party to take this idea further and report back to the management committee.

Sunday runs were discussed and the possibility of formalising these, CW stated that this was difficult as the option of different pace groups, distances and making the runs available each and every week need to be in place. It was agreed that for the moment these would remain "unofficial" and should continue being organised by e-mail and face-book.