

**Strathearn Harriers**  
**Annual General Meeting**  
**7.30 pm Friday 26 February 2016**

**Minutes**

*Present:* Wendy Sweeney, Tony Wayte, Fiona Downie, Andrew Aitken, Lynne Aitken, Gordon Morrison, Nicola Watson, Fiona McDonald, Phil Tipping, Donna Stewart, Colin Tipping, Julia Greenlees, Jeff Sweeney, Alistair Sexton, Edward Elworthy, Digby Sym, Jim McConnell, Wattie MacKay, Phil Mestecky, Liz Mestecky, Mark Dillon, Rowan Dillon, Ruth Howie, Helen Barker, Ruth Clark, Susan Saunders, Wendy Taylor, Dawn Gleeson, Jayne Martin, Doug Flint, Jim Alexander, George Carson, Aaron Dawson, Fiona Lyle, Shelagh Wake, Tracey Oates,

*Apologies:* Beth Fotheringham, Seonaid Roberts, Kerry Sweeney, Cathy Tilbrook, Ali Manners, Will Manners, Andy Gallagher

### **1 Welcome and Review of 2015 AGM Minutes**

Gordon welcomed members attending the AGM.

The minutes of the 2014 AGM were reviewed and accepted. Proposed: Phil Tipping; seconded Liz Mestecky

### **2 President's report, including presentation of Annual Report**

Gordon introduced the Annual Report, describing it as a brief account of the club's activities (athletic, social and financial) during 2015. The Annual Report was circulated at the AGM and accompanies these minutes. Committee members spoke to different sections of the report, so these minutes either summarise some key points from the report or record additional information given at the meeting.

#### *Structure and governance*

During 2015 the club Committee sought external advice on governance structure, and in particular on whether the club should become a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO). SCIO status limits the liability of individual Committee members, but also brings additional administration, the obligation to comply with rules regarding registration and remaining registered, and potential costs of set-up and winding up.

The conclusion reached by the Committee was that the current governance structure is acceptable for the level of risk posed by the club's current activities, provided we continue to ensure the club's activities conform fully with UKA/SA coaching standards and permit conditions.

However, should the club in future wish to take on any significant new commitments, it would be highly advisable to reconsider governance structure.

#### *Club membership*

In 2015, adult membership was 116 (59 men and 57 women), up from 97 in 2014 (51 men and 46 women).

#### *Strathearn Harriers races*

- The Strathearn Marathon took place on 7 June, with 186 entries.
- The Crieff 10k and Junior 1 Mile races took place on 12 July. The 10k attracted 328 entries despite being online-entry only for the first time.
- The Simon Wake Comrie Hills Relay (SWCHR) was on 13 September, with entries from 31 teams.

#### *Charitable donations*

In 2015 the club made donations totalling £1088.31 to the following charities and good causes – research into pancreatic cancer, the Liliias Graham Trust, Comrie & District Piping Association and Comrie First Response Team.

### *Future plans*

Priorities for 2016 are:

- to continue to strengthen the club's coaching resources
- to enhance the quality of training facilities that the club's members can take advantage of
- to build the club's presence and reputation both locally and in the wider Scottish running community.

To help ensure that the club remains in a position to invest and develop further in the future, increased membership fees have been introduced for 2016.

Two initiatives are being introduced this year, with a view to modernising the club and how we interact with members and competitors in our races:

- an online membership management system will centralise and streamline the administration of memberships, club events and payments
- chip timing will be introduced for the Strathearn Marathon and Crieff 10k in 2016, with the aims of keeping the race experience for runners up to date and at the same time reducing the administrative burden on the club.

### **3 Treasurer's report**

Jeff thanked Edward for reviewing and endorsing the accounts for 2015. Key points in the financial outcomes for 2015 were:

#### *Overall outcomes*

2015 income: £18,146.97

2015 expenditure: £18,259.62

deficit for year: -£112.65

#### *Main elements of surplus / deficit*

Strathearn Marathon- net surplus after charity donation	£804.30
Crieff 10k – net surplus after charity donation	£1,777.05
Membership fees – net surplus after Scottish Athletics levy	£388
Grant funding received for Coaching Development	£1000
Junior section costs	-£2,231.25
Social events – net deficit	-£819.27
Clothing – net deficit	-£128.80
Miscellaneous costs	-£1,015.27

#### *Closing bank balance for 2015*

£7184.17 (plus closing clothing stock of £1325)

### **4 Captains' reports**

2015 has been a very good year, with more participation in races and greater success for individuals and teams from juniors to supervets.

This success arises in part from a more structured approach, with focus on the club championship (for spring – autumn events), and the new cross-country championship (for winter events), and the introduction of the priority team events.

#### *Coaching and training*

Good turnouts at regular weekly club runs on Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays and Sundays. In particular, Phil thanked Colin for his organisation of the Monday run.

#### *Harriers in SH races*

Paul Taylor and Cathy Tilbrook won 1st local man and woman prizes at the Strathearn Marathon (6 Harriers competed).

14 Harriers competed in the Crieff 10k, with Wattie coming fifth (2nd MV50), and Wattie, Charlie and Sandy winning first men's team prize.

Five teams competed in SWCHR, with the men's team finishing seventh and the ladies vets team coming second in their category.

#### *Club championship*

Phil thanked Tony for managing the club championship. Winners for 2015 were Wattie Mackay and Cathy Tilbrook.

#### *Priority team events*

Four events were designated as priority team events:

- National Road Relays: our men's team finished 26th
- SWCHR (see above)
- National Cross-Country Relays: MV50 team came second in their category
- Devil's Burdens: four teams competed, with the men's team finishing 12th overall (third best-ever result), women's team finished as seventh women's team

These events are a good way to compare ourselves with other clubs, so Phil emphasised the importance of prioritising our participation in them.

#### *2015/2016 Cross-country season*

Participation in the XC events has been uneven, but there has been some success (winning MV category at Alloa; fourth place overall (second in MV50) at National Masters Championships; and success in National XC Relays (above)). It would be good to see more men and women competing in the XC season next year.

#### *Other*

Phil reported on the achievements on many club members, especially in relation to ultra running. Events included the Highland Fling, Glencoe Marathon, Glencoe Skyline, D33, GO33, 24 hour races, the Lairig Ghru race, the OMM, Cape Wrath Marathon, Celtman triathlon.

Phil acknowledged Andrew Aitken's winning of the Men's President's Trophy, in recognition of the endurance events he completed as part of his Mammoth May and his regular participation at training and racing throughout the year.

#### *Priorities for 2016*

Club captains' priorities for the coming year are:

- to increase the number of club members competing in races
- to increase attendance at club runs and training sessions – the more people we have the more we can tailor the runs/training sessions to make sure everyone gets the most out of them
- to deliver even better results at the priority team events and show how we are developing and progressing as a competitive club

Phil thanked everyone who has supported the club's targets, activities and initiatives over the last year.

## **5 Social secretary's report**

2015 was a busy year for social events:

orienteering at Cultybraggan, weekend away at Badaguish (including quiz), 5x5 relay and BBQ (and new bake-off competition), curling event, pre-Christmas drinks at the Tower Hotel, and annual dinner and ceilidh in January. Susan thanked all the people who have helped her to organise and/or contribute to these different events, especially Cathy and her team, Tracey, Shelagh, Des, George, Jim McC, Liz, Karen, Gordon and Tony.

As outgoing Social secretary, Susan thanked members for supporting her, and expressed her best wishes to the new Social secretary.

## **6 Junior section report**

In 2015 the club had 67 junior members (38 boys, 29 girls), up from 58 in 2014. 2015 was an active year for the juniors, starting with a good turnout of 17 juniors at Gartmorn, followed by the Easter orienteering event and intra-club track event and prize-giving. Nicola thanked Graham, Digby, Susan, Cathy, Jim and Mandy for their help at these events.

Due to changes in Scottish Athletics requirements, in August of 2015 it became clear that the club no longer had appropriately qualified personnel to coach under-12s. Coaching sessions for under-12s were temporarily suspended while a solution was found. We hired the services of Nigel Hetherington, a Level 4 Athletics Coach, to coach juniors of all ages and at the same time mentor three people through their Level 2 Athletics Coach courses, and to help develop a new coaching structure.

Thursday and Sunday sessions are now open to all juniors aged 9–16, and the coaches receive fantastic support from coaching assistants and parent helpers.

We have developed a new structure for the juniors, led by a Junior coaching coordinator, and three groups:

- juniors coaches group (to organise coaching and training planning and sessions, and racing)
- coaching team (for everyone involved with junior training to discuss relevant matters)
- admin team (comprising junior representative, welfare lead, and coaching coordinator, to discuss logistics, welfare, etc.)

The coaches are working on the 'athlete-centred coaching' principle which is tailored to the training and competition level of each individual athlete whether it be road, track, cross county or hill running they aspire to.

We now have five coaching assistants to support the coaches and a very dedicated team of parent helpers to assist at sessions.

We aim to provide a fun, friendly, encouraging environment to develop a love of athletics and enable everyone to realise their full potential in this sport.

We believe that the investment made in the junior section this year, and the development of the new structure, will provide a solid foundation on which the juniors section can build in the future.

## **7 Election of officers and committee**

The following were elected to the main committee, based on a show of hands:

- President: Gordon Morrison (Prop. Tony Wayte; Sec. Fiona McDonald)
- Treasurer: Jeff Sweeney (Prop. Fiona McDonald; Sec. Nicola Watson)
- Secretary: Fiona McDonald (Prop. Julia Greenlees; Sec. Fiona Downie)
- Social secretary: Shelagh Wake (Prop. Susan Saunders; Sec. George Carson)
- Men's captain: Phil Mestecky (Prop. Iain Thomson; Sec. Roger Goddard)
- Ladies captain: Liz Mestecky (Prop. Cathy Tilbrook; Sec. Nicola Watson)
- Media and communications: Tony Wayte (Prop. Lynne Aitken; Sec. Andrew Aitken)

Gordon thanked outgoing committee members Susan Saunders and Mandy Harrison and welcomed Shelagh Wake and Mirela MacInnes in their new posts as Social secretary and Welfare lead, respectively.

Six roles are also co-opted onto the committee; they are:

- Crieff 10k organiser: Nicola Watson
- SWCHR organiser: Kerry Sweeney
- Strathearn marathon organiser: Phil Tipping
- Welfare officer: Mirela MacInnes
- Junior section representative: Nicola Watson
- Club coach: Phil Mestecky

## **8 Any other business**

- Gordon proposed the following clause be added to Strathearn Harriers Constitution in section 8 Finance, as a risk mitigation measure:

“To ensure continuity in the club’s activities in the event of a large variation of income, the policy of the club will be to hold reserves at year-end equivalent to at least two months of annual operating expenditure.”

The proposal was seconded by Fiona McDonald and accepted by the meeting.

- Gordon reminded the meeting that at the 2015 AGM the club agreed to donate 10% profits of our club-organised races to charity. Club members will receive an email inviting them to nominate an appropriate small and/or local charity, along with brief rationale for the nomination; a short list will be made and then club members invited to vote for their chosen charity.
- Digby questioned the decision-making process that led to the use of Braidhaugh for training over the winter months. It was generally agreed that paying for the use of Braidhaugh so seniors and juniors could train under lights and use facilities seemed like a good idea, and that the unusually wet weather, rendering Braidhaugh unusable, could not have been anticipated. Whether we continue to use Braidhaugh, and whether we will want to renegotiate the arrangement with the Rugby Club, will depend on how much we actually get to use it (is it worth £100/month for 6 months or not?) and whether other options become more viable. It was generally agreed that it is appropriate for the committee to make such decisions and that the junior coaching team structure provides suitable channels for relevant information to be passed from all those involved with juniors training back to the committee.
- Colin asked whether the committee has a strategy for positively fostering growth of the club, or whether growth will continue to be organic. It was agreed that the active recruitment of female club members some years ago, the more recent development of the juniors section, the visibility of club members at races, especially team events, our good reputation as an organiser of successful races, and our presence in local newspapers have all been positive drivers in the club’s growth.

Gordon thanked members for attending and contributing to the AGM, and closed the meeting.