

Annual Report of the Committee 2023-2025 Ilkley Harriers AGM 2025

It's been a very successful spell for the Harriers since the last AGM in September 2023. The reason that was 18 months ago rather than 12 is because we held an EGM in September 2024 to make amendments to the constitution which allowed us change our financial year to the calendar year which has a number of significant benefits. That is also why as a one-off the senior club accounts cover a 16-month spell from the start September 2023 to the end of December 2024.

Membership

Our membership year will now run from the start of April, which aligns exactly with England Athletics affiliation, which is by far our most significant outlay each year.

In terms of our membership figures, they are higher than they have ever been. The most accurate picture will come after April once we request the annual payment but we currently have 401 senior, 36 students and concessions, 19 second claim, which is 456 in total, plus 12 trying us out but not asked for payment yet.

A massive thankyou to Petra Bijsterveld for single-handedly looking after the huge task of all the membership admin and all the extra work that has entailed in the last 18 months given the changes we have made, which have included moving to a completely new system and membership database. She has led that project and it all means we have incredibly solid foundations moving forward.

That brings us on to England Athletics - please note that in the last 18 months their basic affiliation has risen from £17 to £20 (from April 1 2025, see treasurer's report) and we also pay £2 per first claim member to Northern Athletics. Numbers worth bearing in mind at the AGM when we propose our membership fees for the upcoming year.

There are multiple benefits for both the club and individual members being affiliated to EA and you can see those in detail by [clicking here](#).

Closer integration between senior and junior sections of the club

For a number of historical reasons, these two parts of the club have been somewhat separate for a number of years but since late last year we've been held bi-monthly meetings to explore ways in which we can work together more closely going forward.

There's so much enthusiasm for this and - whether it's merging the two websites, co-ordinating a real push around the next edition of the PECO Cross Country or simply sharing knowledge - we believe there will be huge benefits for everyone.

It may be that many of our newer senior members don't know too much about the junior section so that's something we're also looking to change. Thanks to all those involved for making it happen in such a positive manner.

And just one recent example of this co-operation is that both the seniors and the juniors have each made significant donations towards the start-up costs of what - thanks to Hattie O'Looney and her team - will be a long-awaited Ilkley parkrun.

EA Club standards requirements

As a part of affiliation to England Athletics, clubs are required to show that they have the policies and procedures in place for good governance, including relating to our duty of care. Ilkley Harriers has met these requirements during the year.

And next month we will be running a First Aid course for 12 of our coaches and leaders which will provide them with a three-year qualification.

Now seems the right time to thank our coaches and many run leaders who generously give up their valuable time each week to allow the club to run smoothly.

We currently have 10 thriving Tuesday evening groups, including Caroline Tong's wonderful initiative for adults with learning disabilities which has been fully integrated into club night.

Thanks also to those who readily help or stand in for the regular leaders.

The races we host

We hosted five events last year:

1/ The Ilkley Moor Fell Race - thanks to Peter Roll. The event was also the Yorkshire Championship race in 2024.

2/ The Pete Shields Ilkley Trail Race - thanks to Neil Chapman. Half the £2,100 profits went to Marie Curie, with the remainder to the orphanage in Uganda which we have supported for many years.

3/ Our bi-annual HDSRL event - thanks to Neil Chapman and also the catering team who provided food afterwards for 400+ runners in what was a great advert for the Harriers.

4/ The new closed-road 10k race in honour of Pete Shields. Neil Chapman, as with so much at the club, was the driving force in making that event happen and become such a resounding success. We were able to give £2,710 (including £1,050 from the trail race) to Marie Curie in appreciation of the help and care they gave to Pete and his family when he was very poorly. The aim is to increase runner numbers to 800 in 2025.

5/ The Ilkley Incline this year - thanks to Alison Weston, Jean Sullivan and Jen Roberts.

And also many thanks to Rachel Carter and Rachel Holder who have continued to lead the junior versions of our races.

The racing year

There have been many outstanding performances in races over the course of the last year or so, many of which were recognised at our recent celebration night.

There are too many to mention here but two stand-out highlights were:

Ben Rothery becoming the men's English Fell Running champion for the first time, after finishing second and third in the previous two years.

And our ladies vet 40 team of Katie Poulter, Rachel Carter, Kate Archer, Alison Weston, Jann Smith and Helen Thurston for winning the British FRA relays.

We'd also like to note all the hard work our captains put in to get those relay teams together - it was lovely to see it pay off in such spectacular style last year.

And the future looks incredibly bright too as one of the features of the last 18 months has been seeing many of our younger members really make their mark on the race scene.

Social

We had a full programme of away runs last summer for the first time since the Covid pandemic, with great turnouts on all the runs and around 80 there for the finale in Addingham. Thanks to Jayne Norman, Lynn Donohue and Dawn Turner for co-ordinating those.

The Christmas relays, organised again by Jeff Green, saw another bumper turnout while last month we enjoyed another great annual celebration / awards night thanks to the hard work of Nick Kealey, Kate Archer and Jean Sullivan.

The club run social nights usually take place on the last Tuesday of the month (though not in February given the AGM!) - please try and get along to meet up with your fellow Harriers, usually at Bar t'at but Peter Roll will post details before each one. Thanks to him for that and if you'd like to help organise other Harriers social events then please get in touch as we're always open to ideas.

And one date for the diary to flag up - 11th May. Harry Brook-Dobson has volunteered to lead an Ilkley Harriers running club section takeover at the Rob Burrow Leeds Marathon / Half Marathon that day.

This is a fantastic opportunity for us to help the organisers of that event, support those running - including plenty of Harriers - and showcase our club at the same time. We'll be looking after part of the route near Adel and Harry and myself will be in touch with full details in early March - please get involved if you can.

Communication

We have continued to use different channels alongside the website updates and emails, with regular use of the WhatsApp group (nearly 300 now on there) alongside Facebook.

And the reports in the Ilkley Gazette news have continued to be a great way to provide greater visibility of club activities. Many thanks to Jill Ezard, Will Worboys and Peter Shelley for doing those - and also to Will for taking over social media duties from Petra.

Committee and other roles

The entire committee has stayed the same for the last two and a half years which has been fantastic for continuity but it's not an exclusive group and roles on it are always open at the AGM - if oversubscribed then we can vote on the applicants.

And there will be changes this year as Vince Gibbons and Paul Stephens are both stepping down.

Both have been hugely valuable members of the committee for many years, most recently as vice chair and joint-secretary respectively and I'd like to thank them on behalf of everyone at the Harriers.

And it was always my intention to hand over the chair role after three years but I've carried on for a little bit longer to see through the realignment of the club year and a couple of other projects but now the time is definitely right for someone else to take the reins and guide the club onwards and upwards.

It's been an absolute privilege to be trusted with the role and something I've loved doing. Thank you to everyone who has helped along the way, especially Dawn who has done so much behind the scenes. And I'm more than happy to stay on the committee for at least the next year to assist whenever it helps.

I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible on Tuesday evening - please do make the effort if you can.

On behalf of the Committee
Jonathan Turner
Chair Ilkley Harriers