

**Abingdon**



**A.A.C.**

## **Abingdon Athletics Club**

Chairman: *Tim Foxall*   Club Secretary: *Abielle Hallas*   Treasurer: *Steve Smith*

### **Annual General Meeting**

Tuesday 18 January 2022

8.15pm

via Zoom

### **Minutes**

**Attendees:** John Stead (President), Tim Foxall; Steve Smith, Abielle Hallas, Peter Akrill, Steve Badcock, Dave Bedlington, Noel Blatchford, Nicky Brock, Lewis Brock, Jamie Brock, Andrew Caruana, James Clayton, Becks Compton, Serge Convers-Reignier, Rosie de Laune, Steve Fabes, Andrew Garner, Freya Halsall, Nic Hamilton, Maria Hamilton, Ellen Herlaar, Matthew Hills, James Hobson, Roy Lewis, Mark Lewy, Nigel Marsh, Colin Mitchell, Julian Moore, Emma Moore, John Newton, Naomi Richardson, John Styles, Jen Swarbrick, Phil Swarbrick, Steve Wade, Sandar Wade, Stuart Watton, James Wigmore

- 1. Apologies for non-attendance:** None
- 2. Minutes of AGM held on 19 January 2021:** Accepted
- 3. Matters arising:** None
- 4. Chairman's report – Tim Foxall**

Almost a year ago to the day, I sat in this very seat and chaired this meeting hoping that 12 months hence would see the pandemic firmly behind us and that by the time our AGM rolled around again, we would be able to hold such in a more personal, face to face, manner.

Sadly though, the last 12 months has seen us become even more used to meetings being held in the virtual world as opposed to in person and as such, to help avoid perpetuating the spread of the virus, we again find ourselves in this far less personal context. I remain optimistic, however, that in 12 months from now, this meeting will be able to be held face to face.

Notwithstanding the practical challenges that Covid has continued to pose with respect to an all-out return to 'normality', I am pleased that as a Club we have managed to meet these

challenges head-on and offer our Members as full a programme of training and competition as it has been practically possible to do.

There have been some bumps in the road along the way and we haven't always been able to hold the events that we would otherwise have liked; our annual Awards Night and Pud Run being two notable casualties, however we very much hope that these will make a welcome return in 2022.

Reflecting on the past 12 months, the Club worked hard in the early part of 2021 to make sure that we could continue to offer as full a training programme as possible, key to which has been our continued close working relationship with Tilsley Park, with whom the Club has worked tirelessly to help ensure that we continue to benefit from exclusive use of the facility on a Tuesday and Thursday evening. This allows our Members to enjoy uninterrupted access of the track and infield, materially enhancing the scope of training we are able to offer, as well as helping ensure the safety of our Members.

This has only been possible through, what I appreciate at times have felt like, fairly stringent Covid rules and restrictions, but I hope that we can all appreciate that these have been necessary to keep our Members and Coaching teams as safe as possible and I am grateful to all for having adhered to the rules so admirably.

I am also grateful to Tilsley Park for their continued willingness to work with us as a Club, with the Park recognising the importance to us as a Club to have access to the track and infield and the undoubted benefit this offers our Members on a weekly basis.

Indeed, as a Club we must be doing something right as membership levels are at a 5 year high, with just short of 550 Members across the Club, which represents an increase of some 22% since last year alone.

Perhaps most pleasing is the near 50% increase in junior memberships, something which is testament to the dedication and hard work of our Coaching Team, who through some reorganisation of the coaching structure have been able to significantly increase the number of junior athletes to whom we are able to offer regular coaching, something which in turn has helped reduce our waiting lists. Sadly, we still cannot offer memberships and coaching to all those who would presently like it.

Indeed, this is perhaps one area where we have contained to be a little hampered by the pandemic. The time and resources it takes to ensure that we can offer training during these unprecedented times is perhaps not always immediately apparent when turning-up to Tilsley Park for a Tuesday or Thursday training session. However, much goes on unseen in the background to help facilitate this and I am forever grateful to the Coaching Team for their hard work in this regard.

However, the time taken-up with dealing with Covid related matters is appreciably a distraction – an important distraction, but a distraction nonetheless – and one which has hampered our efforts on several fronts: succession planning, improving cross-Club integration, broadening our training offer and working on strategies for enhanced inclusivity for example.

These are all matters which remain important to me as Chairman and, all being well in 2022, we hope to be able to direct greater energy and time into advancing such matters.

This said, the Club's Committee remains a relatively small contingent of dedicated volunteers whose personal circumstances and lives often preclude the ability to dedicate significant amounts of time to various Club projects and initiatives. Therefore, I wanted to

use this as an opportunity to appeal to you all to consider stepping forward and offering whatever assistance you feel you can to help ensure the long-term success of the Club. To this end, please do speak to any of the existing Committee Members should you be interested in becoming involved; you need not commit a vast amount of time to make a real difference.

Indeed, during the summer I read with some sadness an email from Steve Smith, the Club's Treasurer, informing me that 2021 would be his last year on the Club's Committee. Steve has been closely involved with the running of the Club for some 10 years now and has therefore more than earned his stripes. Steve steps down from tonight, but as you will see from his report, leaves the Club in a very healthy position financially. I am sure you will all join me in thanking Steve for his hard work and dedication during his tenure and wish him all the very best in a well-deserved retirement from Club activities.

The Club's finances are such that we have been able to commit to some much-needed expenditure on new equipment for our Track & Field athletes, the benefits of which I hope will be seen and felt by many in the coming weeks and months.

Further, Club income is such that it is our proposal to freeze our subscription fees for another year, continuing to make Abingdon AC one of the best value athletics clubs in Oxfordshire to be a member of.

I am keen though to try and ensure parity across our members in terms of inward investment and therefore as a Club we are exploring ways in which our Road Running contingent can get greater benefit from their membership fees. In this regard, we would openly welcome suggestions from our members.

So, what of the future?

Well, 2022 marks the Club's fortieth anniversary, having originally been formed in 1982 under the name Abingdon Amblers.

It is the Club's intention to mark this milestone with an event in the summer, restrictions permitting.

As Chairman, I am very proud to lead the Club into its fortieth year, a Club which above anything else has always sought to be open and welcoming to all.

As such, through 2022 and beyond, I hope that we will continue to grow both in terms of memberships and diversity, while continuing to offer Abingdon and its surrounds the very best opportunities in athletics, irrespective of age and ability.

Finally, I wanted to conclude by taking this opportunity to thank all those who sit on the Committee, all those involved in providing training activities and for all those who give their time so generously. Your collective hard work and dedication over the past 12 months is much appreciated.

Thanks also go to you, our members, for helping to make this Club what it is and for representing us with integrity every time you pull on a Club vest.

Let us all hope that the continued roll-out of the various COVID-19 vaccines means that 2022 will see a sustained return to normality and that Club activities will be less disrupted than they were in the early parts of 2021 and that we can all continue to enjoy and participate in the sports that we are all so passionate about.

## **5. Treasurer's report – Steve Smith**

## **Summary and Significant Factors**

The club has made a surplus of £5,939 for 2021.

As members are aware club activities have been restricted in 2021 due to Covid-19. Whilst we maintained our coaching development program and purchased additional equipment, including PPE, to enable training to continue, other expenditure has been significantly reduced.

In recent pre Covid years expenditure on running the club, excluding passthrough costs e.g. EA fees has typically been in the range £10,000 - £12,000. In 2021 expenditure was £4,051 and this reduction is the reason for the significant surplus for the year.

At the year-end we had £29,993 in the bank. Accordingly, the financial position of the club remains very healthy.

## **Income**

### **Subscription income**

Precise comparison of subscription income between the years is difficult because of the unwinding of the credit offered for renewing members in 2021. The estimated actual cost of those members renewing and taking up the offer was £2,760 for membership and £271 for England Athletic affiliation. Adjusting for that estimate underlying subscription income in total was 21% higher than for 2020. The club's element of subscription income, again on an adjusted basis increased to £9,415 from £7,627 in 2020. This reflects a significant number of new members in 2021.

In 2021, 18 coaches accepted the offer of free membership in recognition of the time that they commit to the club.

### **Abingdon Marathon**

As a result of Covid-19 the Abingdon Marathon has not taken place in either 2020 or 2021 so we have not received donations in either year. Hopefully for all sorts of reasons it will be possible to hold the event in 2022.

### **EA Fees**

Both the amount received through subscriptions and the amount paid to EA are consistent with the higher levels of membership.

### **Sale of kit**

Many thanks again to Stuart Watton for administering the kit. Kit sales returned to more normal levels with over 120 items sold during the year. Orders came in surges and to try and to try to ensure orders can be met the committee agreed to hold higher levels of stock. This is reflected in the year end stock value. We are selling kit at broadly cost price and going forward we are not expecting any significant profit or loss on kit sales. During the year we have continued to subsidise the VAT charged on larger sized junior vest.

### **Christmas Pud Run**

Unfortunately, Covid also scuppered the Pud Run this year. Preparations were well advanced when the decision was taken, and some costs had already been incurred by that time.

## **Expenditure**

### **Affiliation fees**

Affiliation fees returned to a more normal level but the Vets league did not take place again this year.

### **Match fees/race entries**

Match fees are in respect of the Oxfordshire Junior T&F league and the women's national road relay. All other costs were fully reimbursed by participants this year.

### **Trophies and engraving/Club Championship fleeces/sweatshirts**

There were too few events that took place in 2020 to have a Club Championship. Accordingly, there were no trophies or prizes to award.

### **Presentation evening**

There was no presentation evening in 2021.

### **Coaching**

The club continues to encourage people to obtain coaching and officials' qualifications and reimburses the cost. It has provided a safeguarding course for coaches and training to the welfare officers. This is an ongoing programme as we seek to increase the coaching capability of the club. The total expenditure (£1,374) is lower than last year when there was a planned renewal of kit for coaches.

### **Purchase of equipment**

The total spending for the year was £255 (2020 £255) consisted of

Vortex Howlers	100
Plyo bands	100
Foam javelins	148
Long jump and high jump markers	34
Sled harnesses	30
Plastic Space markers	62
Stop watches	60
Gazebo	154
Other (all less than £20)	83
	771

### **Other expenses**

This relates to the hire of Tilsley Park for a committee meeting (2020 Manor School for the AGM).

### **League expenses**

The club hosted a Midland league fixture and participating in the league with a restricted fixture list this year. The VETS league did not take place in 2021 and both leagues were cancelled in 2020.

## 6. Membership report – John Styles

### Overall by group:

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Honorary Life Members	0	7	7	7	7
Competing Coach*	15	14		14	18
Competition only	4	2	2	1	0
Non-competing Coach	8	8	8	8	9
Non-competing Volunteer	9	12	14	14	14
Senior Cross Country	2	3	3	3	7
Senior Full	197	227	202	189	206
Senior Full NO EA	3	12	5	7	7
Senior Full 2nd Claim	9	8	11	13	18
Senior Student / Unwaged	28	32	38	36	38
Senior T&F 2nd Claim	5	4	2	0	1
Senior T&F Other Disciplines	2	2	2	3	3
Senior Track & Field	13	11	12	8	9
Senior XC 2nd Claim	1	3	1	1	1
Social	8	3	5	7	4
U11	37	29	33	31	48
U11 including optional EA fee	3	3	1	0	2
U13	30	33	37	31	50
U15	40	34	37	44	44
U17	18	29	26	23	36
U9	37	15	22	6	22
Juniors	165	143	156	135	202
Seniors	304	348	326	311	342
Total	469	491	483	446	544

### Seniors by age (competing athletes):

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
U20	23	23	13	8	23
20-30	32	38	43	38	44
30-40	46	57	46	42	52
40-50	83	101	81	79	77
50-60	69	72	69	68	76
60-70	19	23	24	20	31
70+	4	5	5	5	6

Membership = 43% female, 57% male (slight increase in difference since last year)  
 As I've said before these numbers are a snapshot of our current position. Some people will have paid and then left the club so don't appear in these totals.

Total membership, juniors and seniors membership are all on a 5 year high.

Total membership is up 22% since last year and 12% since the year before (pre-Covid).

Juniors membership is up 50% since last year and 30% since the year before (pre-Covid).

I would like to thank Emmanuelle Convers-Reignier for all her work as Juniors Membership Secretary and to note that MemberMojo continues to be invaluable as a tool for managing the list of members and the juniors' registers.

## **7. Coach Coordinator's report – Colin Mitchell**

We have had a successful year on the coaching front despite the efforts of the pandemic to try and disrupt our training both on and off the track.

We now have 35+ coaches/helpers regularly turning out giving their time free of charge to help enable our Club members across all ages to improve their enjoyment of our sport.

I would like to say a big thank you on behalf of the Club, for their efforts in 2021 as our club would not be in such a healthy state without them.

Last year in the spring with our Lead Coaches help, we managed to get the Road Running groups back on the track on both Tuesday and Thursday evenings as the Covid restrictions were relaxed, to allow the running of complete laps of the track.

This has meant that we regularly see 90 to 120 members of the Club using Tilsley Park, which has given the Club the opportunity to negotiate an "Exclusive Use of the Track and Infield" arrangement with the TP management on our Tuesdays and Thursdays Club nights from 5.30 to 8.00pm.

This arrangement allows the six coach group leaders to make the best use of TP to ensure that each group can train in a safe environment and to maximise our members enjoyment of training.

We have also used this exclusive arrangement, together with a recruitment drive for more helpers, to bring down the waiting list for our junior groups which has been a thorn in our side for many years.

The Club through the committee continues to invest in coach education and I can report we have now 22 active UKA/EA accredited coaches. We are in the final planning stage with UKA/EA to have an Assistant Coach Course at Tilsley Park to get as many of our helpers on the first rung of the coaching ladder, and to ensure we continue to provide first class coaching to our members.

Our long-awaited extra storage space for equipment (the shed) appears to finally be getting Vale of the White Horse Council approval. Once in place we can start to purchase the much needed equipment to train our Track and Field athletes in their various events for the Club's teams in the Oxford Junior League, Midlands League, and the Southern Vets league, as well as the individual competitions our members enter.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Dave Bedlington who stepped down earlier last year from the role of Coach Coordinator for his sterling efforts over the years; great hand over has made for a smooth transition.

Plus – a massive thank you from me to Stuart Watton for his help as a Covid officer in the last two, very trying years, because no one puts colour coordinated cones out like “Cone King” Stuart.

Lastly if anyone would like to become a helper or coach with any of the age groups - both Road Running or Track – please contact me direct on 9colinmitchell9@gmail.com or 07762073500.

## **8. Official Coordinator’s report – Steve Fabes**

Despite Covid, a reduced Track and Field athletics season did manage to take place, including all our main leagues, but with a reduced number of rounds and events. The highlight was a Midland League event hosted by Abingdon at Tilsley in August.

2022 looks like a more normal year, at this stage. The Leagues are slowly sorting themselves out. We have 4 dates for the Midland League with venues at Coventry, Telford and Stoke, plus a round hosted by ourselves in June. The Vets League is a bit behind but hopefully will issue dates in the near future. As usual we will be looking for support from volunteers, as well as our officials, particularly for our Midland League round on June 5<sup>th</sup>.

Our current position on officials is a bit mixed. We fielded 11 officials during 2021, though to be honest we rely on a core of about 7 who turn up to most events, plus a balance who are more occasional. This is about the bare minimum we can get away with, especially when we will count for officials points in the 4 Midland League rounds. Some good news – Daisy Gladstone joined us as a much-needed Track Judge; I was also Field Referee for the first time at two events and everybody survived! Stuart Watton is in training and should join us for 2022. Sadly, Diane Mitchell retired. Many thanks to Diane for all your efforts over the years, you will be sorely missed!

A quick comment on hosting events. We are almost self-sufficient in being able to run meets, just needing to develop an in-house Track Referee. The Midland League round we hosted was a significant success, with positive comments from the competing clubs. This was due in the main to the efforts of Pete Stepney, our Meet Manager, and Abielle Hallas, our Team Manager, and a host of volunteers, without whom, we would be sunk. Many thanks to all of you, for your efforts and professionalism.

Then we have the usual plug. I would encourage any parent with an up and coming young athlete to consider volunteering or becoming an official. The process to becoming a level 1 official is relatively simple and can be much more satisfying than just spectating. A good place to start would be in the Oxfordshire Junior League matches. A number of parents did give their help in this League in 2021, and enjoyed themselves – it would be good to see more in 2022.

The current pathway to achieve Level 1 consists of an online course (including Health and Safety), assisting and being mentored at four matches, plus a bit of admin. Additional levels are then available if you wish to progress further. You can participate in as many or as few meets as you wish. Courses are organised by England Athletics <https://www.EnglandAthletics.org/officiating/> and forthcoming courses are listed on their site. The Club will reimburse fees in return for a commitment to cover a small number of matches for the Club.

### *Club officials 2021:*

Noel Blatchford, Steve Fabes, Adrian Francis, Andrew Garner, Daisy Gladstone, Jemma Gregory, Nikki Gregory, John Harvey, Judy Howard, Colin Mitchell, and Cliff Penton



Role	level 1	level 2	level 3	Total
Timekeepers		1		1
Starters		1		1
Starter's Assistants	2			2
Track Judges	1	1		2
Field Judges		8		8
Racewalk Judges			1	1

## 9. Social Secretary's report – Jen Swarbrick

2021 proved another difficult year for social activities with the Club starting the year in lockdown which lasted well into March.

We were able to resume some social activities when restrictions lifted and held a few summer river runs with a handful of Club members visiting the pub after. The restarting of parkrun and competitions has also allowed for a more social year.

Given the relaxation of restrictions late summer and into the autumn, the Club decided to hold a Christmas party and ~55 members enjoyed some pre-Christmas socialising and a few drinks at ASK Italian in Abingdon. The food and company were great, and the staff at ASK made us all feel very welcome.

Unfortunately, the Christmas party was the Club's last social event of 2021. The new Covid variant was already present at this time, and with cases increasing we unfortunately made the sad decision to cancel Pud Run for 2021. We didn't feel that the post-run social element could be held safely and the shuttle bus for the relay would also be another point of mixing.

Furthermore, given the event was so close to Christmas any outbreak of Covid risked isolation over the Christmas period when many had plans with family and friends. The Club are looking forward to bringing Pud Run back in December 2022, in the meantime the [Club Champs Calendar](#) is full of great events for the year (thanks to Mark Lewy) – do sign up!

The big event for the Club is the annual awards evening and it's one of the few times the whole Club gets together. We are still hoping to hold an awards evening to celebrate running achievements from 2021 with a potential date in March. The Club Committee will continue to assess the Covid situation closely and make an announcement as soon as we can. Thanks for your patience.

## 10. Election of officers

All committee positions and members are listed in Appendix 1.

## 11. Proposed 2022 subscriptions

It is proposed that the 'base' level of subscriptions for 2022 will remain unchanged.

EA have announced that the affiliation fee will be increased to £16 for 2022. Accordingly, this will be reflected in the club's subscriptions for 2022 and the club element will remain the same in all cases. The proposed subscription levels for 2022 are set out in Appendix 2.

The proposal was agreed.

## 12. Any other business/questions from the audience

### Abingdon Marathon

Covid Permitting, the Abingdon Marathon will take place this year, and at least 280 volunteers will be required to run the event.

### **Motion regarding membership**

Nicky Brock proposed the following motion, which was seconded by Emma More:

*I understand that rightly so coaches get free membership to the club as a thank you for their efforts. I would like to propose a motion that members of the committee are also afforded the same goodwill gesture and given free membership of the club to thank them for all of their hard work in keeping the club running in such an organised manner.*

The motion was read out by Abielle Hallas (Secretary).

Committee members did not vote due to a conflict of interest, and the motion was carried by AGM attendees not on the committee.

### **Vets League**

Reading Athletics Club cannot host the Vets League this year, so an alternative venue is needed for this match. Reading have offered to contribute to the cost of another club hosting, and it was suggested that Abingdon host another time.

However, no clubs have volunteered to run the Vets League overall, and so a manager is needed to fill this role. It was agreed that this issue would be carried forward to a future committee meeting.

### **13. Date of next AGM**

Tuesday January 17<sup>th</sup> 2023

## Appendix 1

### Nominations - Officers and Committee 2022

Office	Holder 2020	Nomination/standing 2021	Nominated by	Seconded
Chairman	Tim Foxall	Tim Foxall	Stuart Watton	Mark Lewy
Treasurer	Steve Smith	Steve Wade	Tim Foxall	Julian Moore
Secretary	Abielle Hallas	Abielle Hallas	Colin Mitchell	Noel Blatchford
Vice Chair	Mark Lewy	Mark Lewy	Julian Moore	Nic Hamilton
Membership Secretary	John Styles	John Styles	Julian Moore	Colin Mitchell
Press Secretary	Steve Wade	Nic Hamilton	Nic Hamilton	Steve Wade
Social Secretary	Jen Swarbrick	Jen Swarbrick	Tim Foxall	Julian Moore
Member	Colin Mitchell	Colin Mitchell	Noel Blatchford	Andrew Garner
Member	Becks Compton	Becks Compton	Noel Blatchford	Andrew Garner
Member	Julian Moore	Julian Moore	Noel Blatchford	Andrew Garner
Member	Stuart Watton	Stuart Watton	Noel Blatchford	Andrew Garner
Member	Dave Bedlington	Dave Bedlington	Noel Blatchford	Andrew Garner
Member		Steve Badcock	Noel Blatchford	Andrew Garner
Member		Serge Reigniers- Convers	Noel Blatchford	Andrew Garner
Member		Ellen Herlaar		
Member	Sandar Wade			

### Non-committee posts

<b>Post</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>
Club Championship	Mark Lewy	Mark Lewy
Vets team mgr (M)	Stuart Watton	
Vets team mgr (W)	Stuart Watton	
Welfare Officer (M)	Peter Akrill	Peter Akrill
Welfare Officer (W)	Ellie Allsop	Ellie Allsop
Coord Argentan	N/A	N/A
Midland League	Abielle Hallas	Abielle Hallas
XC team manager	Gary Richards	Gary Richards
Ox. Mail XC rep.	Marc Juffkins	Jon Bones and John Styles
Membership Juniors	Emanuelle Convers-Regnier	Emanuelle Convers-Regnier
Sportshall League	TBC	
Ox AA cttee member	Andrew Garner	Andrew Garner
Ox AA club rep.	Noel Blatchford	Noel Blatchford
Newsletter	John Styles	John Styles
Website	Becks Compton	Becks Compton
Coaching Coord.	Dave Bedlington	Dave Bedlington
Officials Coord.	Steve Fabes	Steve Fabes
Kit - Seniors	Stuart Watton	Stuart Watton
Ridgeway Relay	James Clayton	James Clayton
Ox Junior League Manager	Josie Brown	
Junior Newsletter	Nicky Brock	Nicky Brock
Motivation Coordinator	TBC	Emma Moore

## Appendix 2

### Proposed subscriptions for 2022

	Club element		EA	Total
	Junior Subs	Senior Subs		
Senior Full		20.00	16.00	36.00
Second Claim		20.00		20.00
Unwaged/Student		10.00	16.00	26.00
T&F Only (1st claim)		10.00	16.00	26.00
T&F Only (2nd claim)		10.00		10.00
XC only (1st claim)		10.00	16.00	26.00
XC only (2nd claim)		10.00		10.00
Social		3.00		3.00
Under 11	25.00			25.00
Under 17	20.00		16.00	36.00
Senior no EA		20.00		20.00
Unwaged / Student no EA		10.00		10.00