



Victoria Park Harriers & Tower Hamlets Athletics Club Annual General Meeting 2017

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Chairman's report - Dave Robinson

Thanks

On behalf of the club membership I am proud to extend an enormous thank you to all who have devoted so much of their time and energy over the past year to provide the organisation, facilities, coaching etc, which we all take for granted : our officials, coaches, volunteers and a growing number of other dedicated members who run, organise and co-ordinate training sessions, monthly handicaps, club championships, track meetings, league races, regional events and various other events including Fell Racing on the Isle of Wight, the Open 5, and much more besides. Additionally our youth coaches not only train our young athletes but also have the added responsibility of care and guidance of youth members in both their athletic and social development.

I will leave the glories of a glorious year's achievements to the Team Captains Reports.

A further thanks to fellow Board members along with other key members who have been pivotal in the promotion, organisation and ongoing success of our club, including amongst others, Neil Cook, Joe Feltham, Joyce , Charlie Maling and Vicky Fabbri who have all continued with or taken on new tasks this year... and to Major, who continues to advise, help and organise events across the entire spectrum of the club's activities. And a big thanks to Tony Bunbury (Monday Circuits) and Mick Cairns (Tuesday structured speed work) whose sessions are both keenly supported.

A special thanks this year to Ian Warren who retired as Director of Finance earlier in the year and to Tony Macdowall & Laura Morgan who are standing down at this year's AGM. Ian, Tony and Laura have all made a massive contribution to the club over a good many years.

Ian was in his 8th year on the Board and 10th year doing the accounts and has singled handedly been responsible for managing and securing the financial future of the club over this period of time.

Tony, who has had a fabulous year personally both on track and XC, has equally been on the Board for a good many years. He will continue to manage the SAL Team with Alf and Charlotte as well as promoting Track and Field Events.

Laura has been a brilliant Women's Road and XC Captain and Director and has been an influential and invaluable member of the Board over all matters.

Thanks also this year to the 'Bar and Social Events Team' of Malachy, Susan, Marlis and Sophie Critchlow.

Getting Involved

Many of you will know that I am always encouraging the formation of teams / groups to help our Captains run the extensive 'Race Calendar' - the monthly handicaps, League and Regional races, Club Championships, Open Events etc,. Please contact the captains if you would like to take on a few responsibilities. The club will also assist members who wish to consider coaching and attending coaching courses.

Youth Section & Welfare

The continued growth of our Youth membership and the development of the Youth Endurance Group has been a rewarding feature of the last few years and it is good to see senior members actively supporting our young athletes.

Pressures on Junior Coaches at the Track and Youth Endurance are considerable and many thanks to Alf, Kelvin, Manny and others at the Track and Cornelia with her Youth Endurance group, assisted further this year by Charlie Maling.

Training young people does bring increasing challenges and it is both a requirement of England Athletics and important for our club that we have safeguarding policies and procedures in place and an appointed Welfare Officer. Welfare covers a range of issues such as safeguarding and protecting children, anti-bullying etc, and

we are mandated to meet our statutory responsibilities to safeguard and protect children. We are very fortunate that Sam Duggan has agreed to take on the role of club Welfare Officer.

Premises - Mile End

The Gym - Control of the gym continues to be problematic

The Track - With a congested track, efforts are being made to try and secure 'vphthac' club only times

Premises - Clubhouse

The 'Old Gym' - We have continued good use of this space by My Local Pilates and occasional use by other groups.

PT and strength and conditioning

Fabien Lassonde (Victoria Park Fitness) has continued PT and strength & conditioning coaching with both club members and other clients this year. This is a much valued and popular resource and we are very lucky to have Fabien both as a trainer and active club runner.

Along with with Tony Bunbury's Monday circuits / strength and conditioning session, our gym and weights facilities are well used by members. Thanks to both.

Hall Hire/ Hosted Events

We have a number of regular Hall users including winter use by 'Our Parks' Yoga on Saturday mornings funded by LBTH. Our clubhouse is also used for number of Charity Events and one-off hirings .

Cottage

We manage the letting of the Cottage ourselves rather than through Agents as in the past. This continues to provide a good income for a little extra work.

Kitchen and Bar Refurbishment & Members Room

There is still work to be completed here, along with the further development of the space to establish it as both a bar and members room . This will also free up the first floor Board Room for other uses / activities. We have in mind the creation a small group to make a start on this and work up some ideas. Please contact me if you'd like to be involved.

Men's road & cross country report – Simeon Bennett

It's hard to believe almost a year has passed since the previous AGM. An exciting season packed with races and some notable achievements, many of which are hopefully captured here in this report, my ninth as Director of Men's Road & XC running.

Cross country

No major changes to the club's participation during the 2016-17 season, with the club competing in the same leagues and events as previous years:

- Both main cross country leagues (Chingford and Metropolitan),
- Middlesex County (in Hillingdon) and the North London XC Champs (held at Trent Park),
- London XC Champs and South of England XC Championships (both at Parliament Hill)
- Ware Cup at Loughton

Metropolitan League

The season started well in October with the usual first fixture of Metropolitan XC league. The aim for the season was to retain our men's A team position in the top league, something we'd worked so hard to take the season before, which we duly achieved, finishing 5th, ahead of our friendly rivals Barnet & District AC (in 8th), and just behind London Heathside (in 4th), who should be our new target for the coming season. Meanwhile our men's B team finished 4th in Division 3 and our men's veteran team finished 5th in Division 1, something we would help to improve in this coming season, given some real strength in our men over 40 at present.

The club will continue to prioritise the prestigious Met League this coming season and will encourage as many members to attend the five races as possible..

Chingford League

Our Men's team were 2nd in the A league (two places higher than the previous year), Our B-team were 3rd in that league (same as previous year) whilst the Veterans had another strong performance to finish 3rd (versus 5th the previous year). It was great to win back the large trophy from our rivals Orion Harriers, especially since the focus was on maintaining our presence in the league whilst pushing for really strong showings in the Metropolitan league. Well done to James Cordwell, Jones, Humphrey, Dale and Ware placing in the top-10 finishers for the season. James also won the men's overall trophy.

In November At the London XC Champs in November the club took 6th placed team (Humphrey, Summers, Lassonde, Barrington). In December the club retained the Ware Cup for another year and celebrated by commissioning a new base for the historic cup which dates back to the 1930s. In January the club battled the early year blues for the Middlesex County XC championships, taking 6th placed team with strong performances from James Cordwell, Max Ware and Steve Hobbs in the Top 40 finishers.

Road Running

Handicap + Mob Match

12 monthly handicap events successfully took place with just under 500 runners starting across the year which is a new record. Juniors were in attendance each month which adds to the atmosphere at the events. As ever, I

am thankful to all of those who help out each month; there has been no shortages of volunteers at handicap and other events this year. Special mention to Coach Cornelia and some of the other parents who support each month.

The January Mob Match was hosted by Eton Manor, where the club lost by a narrow margin despite very strong showing in the top places, due the inclusive nature of mob-match scoring. However, there were no hard feelings at the usual post-race drinks and buffet, our thanks go to everyone at Eton Manor for hosting. We look forward to hosting back around Well Street Common in January 2018, where I'm sure our focus will return to regaining that title.

Assembly League

The full complement of 6 races were held once again, with the club hosting two as usual. The men had a very good season, with our A and B teams coming second. A notable individual performance from Paul Gaimster who took silver in the MV40 category once again.

Marathon + Other Road Races

2016-17 was a fantastic year for the marathon distance, with 48 club members competing at the Virgin London marathon with the usual excellent support from the club along the Highway and elsewhere along the course. In addition the club fielded a significant number of runners at major marathon events around the country and around the world. This year seemed particularly popular for the half-marathon distance at events around the country.

Our men and women had more success at the 10 mile distance, returning yet again to the Harry Hawkes 10 in Thames Ditton. Once again we retained the men's and women's team prizes, which are proudly displayed in the club house.

The club and its volunteers were proud to host other races this year including the Mike Penman memorial mob match once again, the Middlesex County 10k, Pride 10km and supported a number of other charity running events. Thanks to the many many club members who regularly and selflessly gave their time to assist.

Club Championships, Boswall League and Others

I was proud to arrange and run the full compliment of races once again (1, 3.5, 5 mile XC, 10 and 20 mile) with about 220 athletes competing across all events. Thanks once again to those who've helped me with these races, particularly the XC at Woodford where the course requires lots of work to mark out.

Thanks to the good work of Vicky Fabbri who single-handedly took on the demanding role of collating, calculating and calling the Boswall League, taking over from June and Duncan. Congratulations to club starlets Neil and Vicky who won the senior trophies this year.

In 2017 we will again, award the 'Spirit of the Cross Country' trophies kindly donated by June Barrow-Green. They will be given at the AGM. Congratulations to the Most Improved Athletes Vicky Fabbri Chris Brammer. The awards at the AGM are proving to be quite a highlight.

Open 5

After a successful 2016 race, the Open 5 returned once again in 2017, thanks in no small part to Joe Feltham, Major Carr and Vicky Fabbri. Plans are currently underway for the 2018 event. We hope to repeat this in 2017 with a provisional date of April 1st.

Fell Running

The club's love of all things hilly, continued throughout the 2016-17 season. Places for the in-demand Box Hill Fell Race sold out in a number of hours, having been released at midnight, so the club was not significantly represented here. However there was the usual good showing at the Orion Fell Race in June. After an amazing 2016, we took another great team to the Isle of Wight fell running weekend, cleaning up in the highly coveted men's and women's team prize, beating local rivals, Serpentine AC. Additionally there were some very strong individual performances from both the men and women across the age groups. As usual, there were big thanks to Neil Cook for his immense organisation skills making the weekend a success on and off the slopes.

Disruption

The Physical Shield relays were cancelled yet again (fourth year running). Maybe they will return in 2018 but don't hold your breath! Sadly, after finding a volunteer for the Men's/Women's 6/12 stage road relays for 2017 they were unable to commit and so the club did not enter teams for this event. However, some teams were sent to the 4/6 stage road relays, held at Crystal Palace in September. Hopefully we can submit teams to the 6/12 stage in the new season.

Looking Ahead

The coming season has got off to a good start with the Isle of Wight galvanising many for the forthcoming Cross Country season. We will prioritise the prestigious Met League and aim for good attendances at each of the Chingford League races. We will aim to introduce as many new members as possible to the joys and camaraderie of XC running. It remains very much essential that all members feel included, valued and encouraged to participate in races and club events, whilst also being encouraged to volunteer and support as well.

We will look to build a popular Open 5 race once again with as many running or supporting as possible. We will continue the fun in to the new year with strong support expected at the Assembly League series, various open races (marathons, half marathons and others such as the Harry Hawkes 10 mile) as well as relays once we are back on the tarmac. Lastly special thanks to all of those who have given their time to assist this year, including Major Carr, Coach Mick Cairns and the many others who have helped out with events, races, session-leading and administration. Thanks, best wishes and good luck go to Laura Morgan who is stepping down after years of loyal service on the board, to have her first child (with partner and fellow club member Sam Humphrey).

Women's road & cross country report – Laura Morgan

It has been another great year in which I have been in the privileged role captain of the women's team in both road and cross country events, as the ladies' team has continued to go from strength to strength. Aside from the hard work and training that goes in to each individual's success, a number of individuals contribute to the activities of the club, which continues to make it a truly brilliant organisation to be a part of.

Inter club Leagues

In the highly competitive Met League the women's team finished in 8th place in Division 1, with the B team coming 4th in Division 3. There were some excellent results from the vet team, placing 3rd in Division 1, ahead of both the Serpentine and Highgate Harriers (team scores of 100, 99 and 64 respectively). There were some great results by both new and existing members, with particularly excellent running from Rachel Thomas who came 12th overall in the league.

Although the Met League has been classed as the priority cross country league for the club, members continued to turn out in droves for the Chingford league for the 2016/7 season, no doubt with thanks to Joyce Berry who continues to act as Chingford League captain for the club, organising and motivating runners and even coming to support on the coldest of evenings in Hog Hill when suffering with a cold last November. The women's team narrowly missed out on second place in this year's overall results after being pipped to the post by Eton Manor by just one point, with Orion taking first place. The Women's Vet's team also came third with a great showing in a number of the races.

A great turnout for this year's Assembly league seen the ladies team raise to 2nd place at the end of this season, with Faye Jeacocke and Sue Bint also taking the 2nd and 3rd places in the V40 category overall.

London Marathon

Around fifty club members finished the Virgin London Marathon on a sunny Sunday in April this year, showing some excellent results from a winter of hard training and supported by the usual solid support crew. The ladies team performed brilliantly, finishing in 4th place overall, with Sophie Donges finishing in 2:58:12, Rachel Thomas in 3:07:42 and Holly Weir in 3:11:15. Congratulations to June Barrow-Green who came 11th in her age category (V60) in 3:49:08 and to Naomi Bourne who came 19th in the V45 category in an impressive time of 3:12:19. Special mention to Connor Johnstone for helping a fellow runner in distress in the Thames Street tunnel sacrificing his own potential PB.

Handicap

The monthly handicap races have continued successfully facilitated mainly by Captain Bennett, Major Carr and Len Williams, with Richard Hale now also regularly helping with the results and numerous other volunteers helping with marshalling and timing. There are regularly over 50 members each month now including the juniors, co-ordinated by Cornelia Abe-Minale with the help of Charlie Maling.

Trail and other races

A huge congratulations to the truly inspirational Elaine Battson who completed the extremely challenging 103mile course of the Ultra Trail du Mont Blanc which involved 45hours of running over numerous mountain passes of over 2500 metres altitude, as the only V50 British runner to finish. Elaine then followed this up by joining the clubs' success at the SEAA fell championships at the Isle of Wight just a fortnight later.

The club continued to put on good representation in many of the permanent annual fixtures including the Ware Cup, the annual Mob match with Eton Manor, the North London XC champs, the North London XC champs, the Southern England XC champs and the Pride 10k and the Middlesex 10k. The Women's team narrowly missed out on the team prize for a tough and technical Orion 15 this year (which was actually cut slightly short by the majority of the field who only ran just over 14 miles). Thanks to Captain Bennett for his on-going organisation and efficiency in the running of the Club championships events which continue to be well attended, and thank you to Joe Feltham who managed to pull off another successful Open 5 race this year. There are now a number of large scale events and smaller local events across the country in which the club is well represented including the Harry Hawkes 10mile race and many half marathons, topped with the Hackney Half marathon in which over 40 club members ran.

Other news / Future plans

A number of significant factors contribute to the clubs success in various races and maintaining it's membership, notably Men's captain Simeon Bennett who leads on most events taking place in the park, has a huge role in encouraging all members of the club to volunteer, train and race and continues to oversee much of the operational side of the club. Thanks to Coach Cairns who has maintained the ever-growing Tuesday night interval training, and to Tony Banbury who coaches the much loved circuit training on Mondays.

Chairman Dave Robinson who has continued to act as general handyman, caretaker, club architect plus as project manager in the renovation of the bar. With membership consultation and board approval, Dave has dragged the clubhouse kicking and screaming into the 21st century and turned it into a very welcoming, modern and larger space to accommodate the ever popular post training / post race refreshments.

The bar and catering team, headed up by Susan Leese and Malachy Woolohan continues to be a 'force majeure' in the social side of the club, ensuring a warm welcome and much needed refreshments for Thursday nights, events hosted by the club and during the infamous Christmas and Summer parties. Newer member Alison Tay's baking has been very welcome here. There are many other individuals who regularly contribute to the club events so a big thank you to those not named here.

Congratulations to club members Vikki Fabbri and Neil Cook, to Joe Feltham and Gemma Dunlop, Malachy Woolohan and partner Matty, Stanley and Claire Greening, Rachel and Rupert Rowling, Josselin Polini and partner Diana, and Charlie and James Bewley on the births of Nico, Alexander, Cieran, Zoe, Archie, Elian and Archer over this last year. I'm sure some of these new members will be a great contribution to the youth team in just a few years' time.

I will sadly be stepping down from the board following four years of leading the women's road and cross country team, with increasing demands on my time from work and family meaning I am no longer able to justify occupying the role. I am however planning to continue to be involved with the club in various ways and will continue to support whoever will take on this great role of Women's Road and Cross Country Captain.

The success of the club really does depend on those involved with it so please keep an eye out for how you can contribute if you feel you could support more.

Best Wishes for the new season!

Women's track and field report – Charlotte Nicholls

This year was our second season in the Southern Athletics League. Having narrowly missed out on promotion last season we managed to put out a consistently stronger team this year, securing promotion (narrowly missing out on winning our league).

We were fortunate to have some strong first year U17 athletes eligible this season – including Kiah Dubarry-Gay, Nayanna Dubarry-Gay picking up some great wins. Diane Mapamboli also performed well in her first year in this age group, being named woman of the match for our fixture in Bury St Edmunds.

It was good to see the continued increase in long distance runners coming to track and field competitions this season, with athletes getting wins in distances that they wouldn't normally race over. Hopefully this will continue into next year as we come up against stronger teams, giving the chance for more competitive races for our stronger endurance runners to participate in. We had trouble consistently filling the steeplechase events, something we hope to improve on for next season.

In the jumps events we had a particularly strong group of triple jumpers competing for us – Claudimira Landim being unbeaten at the competitions she was able to attend including being named woman of the match in the first fixture. We have not as yet got any female pole vaulters in the club which may lose us valuable points when competing in the higher league next year.

In the throws we picked up consistently high numbers of points with the addition of Precious Hamilton (shot put, discus and javelin) to the team, throwing the senior weight shot put for the first time. In the hammer throw, Hazel Robertson increased her own club record by over four metres which now stands at 39.93m. Hazel also got her first intercounties outing this season for Middlesex, competing in both discus and shot put.

Away from the league competitions, Perri Shakes-Drayton was back on the track, with a strong return to form resulting in her selection for the 4x400m relay team for the World Championships in London over the summer followed by a win in the 500m at the Great North Games.

Looking ahead to next season, we will be competing in Division 2 of the Southern Athletics League. This will have us coming up against stronger clubs, however with the strength of our athletes, we will be hoping to work towards further promotion into Division 1. We will also need to increase our number of officials for next season, having lost points this season for lack of officials.

A huge thanks to everyone who has helped make these competitions successful this season – especially to Major Carr for taking on refereeing duties (both track and field) for our home fixtures. A further thanks to all of the coaches at the track who give up their time for our athletes.

Finance report – Faye Jeacocke

Overview

The Club finances remain strong, cash flow was positive during the year even with the investment in the bar refurbishment.

Investment in assets

Clubhouse bar refurbishment – significant investment was made with the refurbishment of the bar in 16/17. The cost of this to end March '17 was £29,684.

Financial highlights

Income

A breakdown of the last 4 years recurring income streams is provided below.

Recurring income (£)

	2014	2015	2016	2017
Donations	5,280	3,000	1,764	1,050
Subscriptions	26,121	30,122	32,048	31,979
Cottage rent	17,393	14,494	17,587	17,655
HQ hire	2,760	5,672	8,518	8,175
Club kit	2,590	579	662	1,014
	54,144	53,867	60,579	59,873

Grants/Donations– the donations received in this period were mainly from Greenwich Leisure and events hosted in the park, such as London Pride 10k and from PureActive for the Open 5.

Membership subscriptions – remained at £32K, thanks to all the efforts of Neil Cook, Alf Vickers, Major Carr, Simeon Bennett and others ensuring members at Victoria Park and Mile End pay their fees.

Cottage rent – income from the cottage was consistent with last year at £17.6K.

HQ Hire –income from clubhouse held steady against 2016, after the efforts of the board in previous year to increase the income from the clubhouse hire. Please see breakdown on next page.

HQ hire 2016/17 (£)

Pilates	4,035
Personal training	2,930
Yoga	280
One off hires	<u>930</u>
	8,175

Expenditure

Travel and subsistence costs are roughly in line with the prior year. The costs mainly arise from minibus hire for travel to and from track and road/x-country races for juniors and seniors.

Coaching fees include coaching at schools, summer/holiday athletic programmes and wheelchair / disability coaching at Mile End. These are funded either by schools providing income or by specific grants (i.e. LBTH mainstream grant). Fees were above income.

The club lost an appeal with London Borough of Tower Hamlets re business rates for refuge collection and subsequently had to pay full year costs of £3,185.

Cash Flows

The tables below give the closing cash position at the last two financial year-ends and also at 30 September 2017. The club's calculated minimum cash reserve is 6 months expenditure, approximately £25,000. Cash

commitments are shown as at 31 March 2017.

Cash position	Closing 31/03/2017	Closing 31/03/2016	Movement 2016-17	Current 30/09/2017
Current account	40,971	22,132	18,839	23,138
Deposit	81,624	76,005	5,619	81,624
Development account	14,403	16,436	-2,033	14,641
Total Cash	136,998	114,573	22,425	92,148
<i>Cash excluding development account</i>	122,595	98,137	24,458	73,679

Cash commitments	2017	2016
Allocated cash		
- External coaching*	16,000	16,436
- Mile End gym	600	3,300
- Tenancy deposits	2,407	2,345
- HQ bar/kitchen	11,683	30,000
Minimum cash reserves	25,000	25,000
Total allocated cash	55,690	77,081
Total cash	136,998	114,573
Unallocated cash	81,308	37,492
*TBC		

Future plans

The following areas are being considered for the in the current year:

- Increase revenue from hiring out the Club House facilities (Old gym and main hall / gym)
- Possible refurbishment of committee room for external rental.