

**ASHFORD ATHLETIC CLUB**  
*Promoting athletics at the gateway to Europe*



**Minutes of the Ashford Athletic Club AGM**  
**Held at Sandyacres, Kennington on 28<sup>th</sup> January 2023 at 7pm**

Present:

Paul Maxted – Chairperson & 56 Club members.

Paul welcomed everyone to the 58<sup>th</sup> Annual AGM

This was the 1<sup>st</sup> yr face to face since covid and the best turned out AGM for many years, Paul thanked everyone for coming. All Committee members introduced themselves.

**1. Apologies for absence:**

Dave Fox

**2. To confirm the minutes of the 2022 AGM:**

The minutes were sent out prior to the meeting. Proposed by Pete Le Rossignol, seconded by Jacqi Snare.

**3. Matters Arising from the 2022 Minutes:**

No matters were arising.

**4. To receive reports:**

**Chairpersons report by Paul Maxted**

Firstly, wow what a first year as Chair! I must say a big thank you to everyone here on the committee for his or her outstanding contributions to the club over the last year. The tasks sometimes can prove very challenging at times, especially with no track!

We, as a club as a whole - the Officials, Volunteers, Parents and the athletes, once again learnt to adapt throughout the year positively with the Covid restrictions finally disappearing and the long, drawn-out renewal of the track. So well done and thank you everyone for your support and patience.

**Our legacy - Remembering Club members from old whom have passed away last year 2022:**

**Vera Goodman**, Past AAC Exec committee member fund raiser and assistant team manager for many years.

Part of the Oostende era where Ashford A.C made a name for themselves in Belgium France etc

**Ted Hawkins**, and his wife **Elizabeth**. Past Exec committee member + Chairperson and Coach and one of the earliest members of AAC.

**Chas Robinson**: Past coach for many years, A.A.C Team Manger.

ALL ABOVE PART OF THE GOLDEN OLDIES ERA.

### **Some positives to hold on to:**

We are back up on our membership numbers equivalent to a few years ago, prior pre-pandemic.

Positives from 2022, Outstanding individual performances from track competitions to X country performances.

Another positive, the under 11's once again became Kent Sports Hall champions for 2022/23. Even more remarkable is all the events for the Sports Hall competition are all indoor disciplines.

Therefore, a massive thank you to all the coaches involved in this, and a well done to all the athletes.

In addition, the annual Ashford/Givaudan 10k was back on the streets since 2019 also as a virtual race, organised by Sporting Events and what a day it was! Although we didn't have as many runners as previously, we are pleased to get the event back up and running. The buzz and positivity were clear to see with athletes/fun runners taking part. Thank you to all the amazing volunteers who gave up their Sunday morning to support the race and club. We look forward to this event returning to its pre-pandemic numbers soon. attracting even more competitors and local businesses.

### **A plea for help**

As we move forward to the summer of 2023 the committee needs to decide what leagues and events the club enters. The committee, coaches and officials are all volunteers and do not get paid for the time they give to the club, most of the committee are also coaches or officials so have lots to organise and juggle to ensure the club continues to operate and function as smoothly as possible. That is on top of our daytime jobs and family commitments.

To enter the various league competitions and to organise our own open meetings we rely on volunteer officials and team managers to ensure we can send a team. Unfortunately, unless we get more volunteers to come forward, we will not be able to enter league matches as it is not far to enter or attend a league match without providing officials and we will not be able to organise our popular open events.

To be successful in the leagues we enter, we also need to have athletes to compete across all events to maximise the number of points we can gain for the club. The more athletes compete, the more points we gain and the less pressure on athletes to do events they are not happy doing. Therefore, this is an appeal to parents and athletes to commit to competing for your club and offering some of your time to volunteer and make the club a success again. We have some amazing athletes, coaches and members but need your support to develop the club so we can grow and move forward. We have the best facilities in Kent and should be the number one club in rural Kent. So, if you are willing to volunteer and commit to competing for Ashford Athletic Club, please email Donna. If we do not get enough volunteers or athletes coming forward to support us, we will need to make the difficult decision not to enter leagues or competitions due to a lack of volunteers.

So, here's to moving forward to the future of AAC and a big thank you once again to all of you who each hold an important role in the support of the club.

We as a committee are very approachable and please, any issues or requests etc you can email us at any time or catch us on most club nights. We meet the first Monday of every month via Zoom as a committee to discuss any issues arising.

#### **Financial Report by Sarah:**

Sarah gave a report on the clubs' financial situation. There were no questions.

#### **Membership Report by Kate Dickinson**

Kate stated membership had been up and down over last few years, especially during covid and with members going to university, however, there are lots of youngsters coming in.

Kate always feels like she is asking for training fees and subs, and thanked those who are prompt.

The online membership website was launched at the end of 2019 which was helpful especially during covid.

Membership is now back to pre-pandemic levels, from 2020, 106 new members have joined, and there are quite a few on the waiting list.

Training nights – during pandemic coach/members were restricted so membership was reduced. A number of years ago, there used to be 60-80 athletes a night, but there had been a drop, recently though numbers were back up to about 60 a night which is positive.

The Website is now quite old, created 2014, however, there will be a new site launched in the next few months which will, hopefully, be more visual. We are looking at having more photos, new and old, and I'm asking if parents wish photos of children to be added to send to the address on website. The site will, hopefully, be up and running in Feb/March.

I will be hoping to pass finance onto other committee members in the near future.

#### **Cross Country and Road Running Report by Stella Bandu & Gerard O'Sullivan:**

##### Cross Country

Under 20 Mens XC team was highly successful at local and national level. Louis Small was selected to represent England at the Home Countries International XC in Belfast. Jack Small won the Kent XC championships. Louis Small won senior boys English Schools XC championships.

The numbers participating in XC have substantially increased.

SEAA XC Relay Championships under 20 team of Jack Small, Louis Small, Wegahta Zerom - 1st!

English XC relay Championships: under 20 team of Jack Small, Louis Small, Wegahta Zerom - 2nd

Kent XC Championships: under 20 team of Jack Small (1st), Louis Small (3<sup>rd</sup>), Wegahta Zerom (4<sup>th</sup>) Team - 1st!

SEAA Championships: under20 team of Adam Lane, Jack Small, Louis Small (3<sup>rd</sup>), Wegahta Zerom Team - 2nd

National XC Championships: Under 20 team of Adam Lane Jack Small, Louis Small, Wegahta Zerom Team - 5<sup>th</sup>

The 10 AAC athletes were selected for Kent XC teams in 2022.

##### Road Running

Ashford Givudan 10km was won by Wegahta Zerom in his debut over this distance.

Inter-Counties 10km - William Knight, Oliver Prior and Marshall Smith selected for Kent.

AAC runners featured in the national top 25 and many club records were broken.

<b>National rankings Highlights Top 25</b>	<b>New Club records set in 2022</b>
Marshall Smith u23 10 miles (4 <sup>th</sup> ) Half Marathon (5 <sup>th</sup> )	Ian King v50 10km, 20miles, Marathon
William Knight u23 5miles (17 <sup>th</sup> ) Half Marathon (18 <sup>th</sup> )	Louis Small u20 5k
Louis Small u20 5k (11 <sup>th</sup> )	Marshall Smith u23 10miles and Half Marathon
Jack Small u20 5k (18 <sup>th</sup> )	Kate Woodbridge v35 marathon
Wegahta Zerom u20 5k (21 <sup>st</sup> )	
Oliver Prior u23 5miles (14 <sup>th</sup> )	
Ian King v50 20miles (3 <sup>rd</sup> )	

### Breaking 3 and East Kent Road relays

Breaking 3 is marathon performance training group in Ashford with the aim of breaking sub 3hours /3.45 for the marathon. On Tuesday and Thursday, they train at the track.

East Kent Road Relays are a series of 5 interclub relays. Ashford AC fielded teams in various categories.

The Breaking 3 group continues to grow in number and in the number of athletes breaking 3 hours. The training Year works around spring and autumn marathons with strength and speed work taking place outside the main training blocks. This year we have athletes going to London, Brighton and Manchester as well as far as Tokyo.

The road relays provide a nice distraction in the summer but with younger runners doing exams and many Breaking 3 runners competing for their first claim clubs, we sometimes struggle for teams. Last year was a case in point with some relays seeing four or five teams and others only two teams. It was good to bring some youngsters through to participate but with these being open events on roads, it does require the presence of parents.

All in a successful year that recovered well from the long track closure.

### **Sports Hall 2022/23 by Jacqi Snare**

Throughout the past 15 years, Ashford AC's young athletes, the core of Ashford AC, have been a force to be reckoned with when it comes to Sports Hall competition, becoming Kent Champions on numerous occasions and ranked in the top 2/3 in Kent on all other occasions.

We have always had a selection of young athletes from these Sports Hall events picked to represent their County and gaining their first Kent vest ... a massive achievement at such a young age.

This year has proved no exception, with a record number of athletes from Ashford AC taking part in all the Sports Hall competitions over the last three months – 40 athletes in total. 15 of these young athletes have been selected to represent Kent across all three age groups, under 11's, under 13's and under 15's. All of them will be off to Burgess Hill at the end of February to compete in the regional Sports Hall finals. An amazing achievement for some as young as 9 years of age.

Every athlete from AAC who takes part in these competitions has shown great team spirit, dedication and commitment, every point gained in their given event has helped Ashford to be recognised.

We, as Coaches, are proud of every one of you.

I would also like to thank the support of all the parents, in their encouragement to all the athletes.  
Thank you from Coaches Jacqi, Hayley, Richard, John, Lyndsey

Kent Selection:

Under 11

Lily Catt

Jessica Phillips

Emma Smith

Alex Bull

Josh Harrington

Leon Booth

Finley Mattison

Dylan Warner

Under 13

Dylan D Davidson

Jake Phillips

Finley Patton

James Wilcox

Under 15

Isaac Woods

Violet Maxted

Mia Pearson

## 5. Election of officers

Executive committee members will all be staying, Paul asked for new members. Kate explained what vacancies there are: Team managers for SAL, YDL, XC, fund raising, race walking, looking for grants, athlete welfare and meeting manager for home matches. Volunteers were asked to help at home matches.

President

Life Vice Presidents

Support Team:

Schools Liaison Officer

TM S/L

TM YDL

TM KL

TM XC

Race Walking Manager

Fund Raising Manager

Website Support

Grant Support

Meeting manager

10k Organising Team

Executive Committee

Membership Secretary

Hon Secretary

Coach Liaison/Track night coordinator

Athlete Welfare Officer x 23

One Team managers representative

5 ordinary members

## Club Support Team Continued

President: Mr Derek Laws, proposed by Exec Committee

Richard Harrington gave a speech introducing new President Derek Laws:

‘Derek became part of the Ashford Athletics family back in 1989 when his daughter Tracey joined the club. After that time, Derek got much more involved, he helped AAC fund raise as the club’s financial stance was not good. From there, Derek helped to form a fund-raising committee who organised all the social events to raise as much money as possible.

From 1991, wanting a new challenge, for the next 17 years, Derek became the Ladies Team Manager. The team at the time was lying in Division 2 of the Southern Women’s League. Derek, with the help of an outstanding group of athletes, managed to gain promotion all the way up to Division 2 of the UK National League (UKWL) with their best position as 3<sup>rd</sup> in that League.

Derek used to take the team to Oostende in Belgium to take part in the Wellington Relays each year, where the womens team won 8 yrs in a row. It was during this time Derek became the clubs Pole Vaulting Coach and I’m very proud to say I was Derek’s first athlete he coached. It was at this time Derek gained national recognition as one of the UKs best pole-vaulting coaches. The number of people Derek has coached throughout the years would be eye watering.

Over the years, Derek has had numerous roles within the club. He has been part of the committee for around 20 years and Chairman for 8 yrs.

So, on behalf of Ashford Athletic Club and everyone present here tonight, it gives me great pleasure to present you and welcome you to the club as the next Ashford Athletics Club President’.

## 6. Election of Officers

President	Mr D Laws	
Life Vice Presidents	Mr D Fox	Miss L Hall – proposed by exec committee
	Mrs M Seamon	
Vice Presidents	Mr & Mrs D Russell	Mr Ray Firth
	Mrs L Stuart-Smith	Mrs M Hambrook
	Mr P Woods	Mrs H Willicott
	Mr J Hobbs	Mr J Hughes
	Mrs P Missing	

Meeting closed at 1919hrs.