

Chair's Report for the AGM 2019

Another great year – well done, Beetroots!

Thank you to everyone – athletes, coaches, officials and volunteers for all your contributions over the last year. I am proud to be chair of our fantastic club.

I would like to mention all the committee members and thank them for their work too. Many others also work quietly behind the scenes making things happen smoothly. Our coaches give their time willingly for free, supporting their athletes in all sorts of weather. Thanks also to our team managers for their continued commitment during the past year. We could not manage without you all.

It has been another excellent year for the club.

- The committee agreed to move forward with plans for a training track in Burgess Hill
- Membership continues to grow, particularly in the junior section
- We are now the seventh largest club in Sussex
- We have seen improvement across the board, in particular, amongst our younger athletes
- Mags Lazelle and team organised a very successful new WSFRL event, the Great Walstead Five.

Among the many club successes this year, James Skinner continues to impress and he is now ranked 8th overall nationally in his age group, V45. Emma Navesey has broken more club records including the 10k road record and the half marathon. Well done to both of these amazing runners whom we are proud to have as members of our club.

This year was one of the club's best ever for participation and achievement in cross country with many individual and team prizes. Richard Bates completed all the West Sussex Fun Run League events in 2018 and there were age category prizes for Ben Duncan and Karen Thompson in the Sussex Road Race Grand Prix. Samantha Ridley was selected to wear an England vest in the Masters Marathon championship later in the year. Michael Burke took on, and completed, the ultra of all ultras, 'The Spine', 268 miles run continuously at the same time raising money for Mind. Mindboggling (sorry).

This year more young athletes than ever were selected for the inter-counties Sportshall League final and the club won the plate trophy in the U13 League Final. Charlie Parvin was selected for Sussex Sprint Squad and Ethan Lambert equalled the Sports Hall League U15 Speed Bounce record. Arun Khursheed won a bronze medal in the U11 boys at the Sussex XC Champs and an overall bronze medal in the XC League. Sam Fernley, Darja Knotkova-Hanley and Emma Navesey all ran for the Sussex Team at the Inter Counties XC.

In particular I would like to mention our under 11 and under 13 boys. There have been some outstanding results in these age groups and we cannot wait to see what happens in the future. Please read Paul Cousin's excellent Middy reports on our website for more information on club achievements. Too many to list here.

The club hosted a number of events during the year – our Open Track and Field competition at K2 in April, the Mid-Summer Relays in June, Wakehurst Willow in July and the Walstead Five (WSFRL) in October. This year we have a new event – the Redwood Run in Sheffield Park. Thank you to all who helped at these events and we are very grateful to those who took a lead role in organising.

Challenges remain in trying to meet the demand for junior places, something we have yet to resolve. More coaches are needed so the club has continuity and can look to the future with confidence. We still have no permanent base to call ‘home’. Lastly, as ever, help is needed in running the club. If more members take on small, manageable roles then there is less for the committee to do. For example, we need someone to manage our social media and to take a lead on sponsorship. This is important as we start what may be a long road to establishing a training track in Mid Sussex. We are working on this project with Burgess Hill Runners and are about to set up a steering group. Early, but exciting, days.

Here’s to more enjoyment and club success in 2019 and beyond. Can’t wait.

Kind regards

Marion, HHH Chair March 2019