

Saffron Striders AGM

4th December 2019, 8pm

Saffron Walden Cricket Club, Saffron Walden

Present:

Alistair Cooke	Graeme Loudain	Chris Dodge
Fiona Halls	Mark Fitzhenry	Mark Frow
Thomas Roeleke	Jo Dallas	Iain Rogers
Shani Lewis	Linda Brett	Mike Bradley
Gavin Long	Anna Kotowska	Paula Thurston
Lisa Plumb	Nigel Coates	Iain MacDougall
Howard Williams (Auditor)	Guy Tremayne	David Raimondo
Martin Green	Anna Cooper	Nick Wilkinson
Lisa Plumb	Sam Scheibel	Alan Jones

1. Apologies for absence:

Helen Hewlett	Rebecca White	Simon Ede
James Hewlett	Nick White	Keith Savill
Neil Halls	Kate Holden	
Chloe Brown	Simon Chambers	

Alistair welcomed everyone to the meeting and said it was his 3rd AGM as Club Chairman. He also thanked David Barrs and Sue from Saffron Walden Cricket Club for letting us hold the meeting at their venue and putting on the bar for us.

2. Minutes of the 2018 meeting

Minutes of the 2018 meeting were reviewed and no comments or updates were made so they were then signed off

3. Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

4. Treasurer's report

Detailed club and race accounts were circulated and a report given by Ian.

The Club currently had £10,138.70 in its account (last year it had £12,695.84).

Points to note:-

- The club had £2.5k less in its account this year compared to last year, this was partly due to the Saffron Striders 30th Birthday party which cost £2k
- As a result of GCAN folding and some extra funds being made available, Saffron Striders were able to purchase a tannoy system to be used at races as well as a new set of timing chips

- Ian also mentioned that the Nationwide Building Society Account needed to be closed at the end of the year and that that money would be moved to Santander where our other account was held
- There was still money outstanding from Jason Coles who had agreed to sponsor the club £100 towards the cost of the race.
Action: Ali to chase Jason for the sponsorship payment
- Active Training World still owed the club £759 from the Fast 5 race as well
Action: Ali to chase Active Training World for the missing amount

As always, a big thank you was given to Howard for auditing the accounts which he had done for the past 20 years, and an appreciation gift was given to him. Howard had been the Auditor for the club on a purely voluntary basis. Alistair pointed out that it is not a requirement of our Constitution that the accounts are audited, but if anyone wished to volunteer to do this, then to please let Ali know.

5. Committee Member reports

a. Membership

Simon Ede had last minute problems in getting to the meeting, so Graeme Loudain gave the report:-

Points to note:-

- In Dec 2019 the club had 242 paid up members, this was an increase of 84 people last year (158 members in 2018), almost double that of two years ago!
- Beginners numbers had increased to 71 in 2019, compared to 53 in 2018
- The club currently had 4 2nd Claim members
- There were currently no unpaid membership fees
- From 2020 and going forward, Graeme planned to record the number of beginners who went on to renew memberships the following year
- Age group breakdown showed that the majority of members were in the 40-49 age group, closely followed by the 50-59 year old age group.
- The club currently had 127 female members and 115 male members
- The club did not set out to attract or retain any particular age group or gender

Graeme was satisfied that all new member applications, including Beginners, had been dealt with promptly (within 2 days). New members had all received a welcome letter.

Mailchimp was used extensively for communications, presently he was managing with the free version, but their new rules may involve the club taking a subscription in the future.

This year the membership database had been used effectively for gathering the requirements of attendees at the annual dinner and for easing the workload of the team captains when doing results at 5K and XC races.

Ali gave a huge thanks to Simon Ede for all the hard work he had put in with regards to Membership and also to Graeme Loudain for helping Simon out with this role going forward.

b. Club Development

Alistair informed everyone that since James Hewlett had moved away Ali had taken on the role of Club Development Officer. He then gave the following report:-

Alistair and James (who has now stepped down at this AGM) has held many Multi-threaded conversations in regard of securing the club a better, permanent base to call home. Their

desire was to have somewhere the club could potentially host a notice board, trophy cabinet and somewhere to change, shower and leave bags securely on Club Nights.

This was not a particularly ambitious list of requirements and actually something basically fundamental any sporting club should aspire to have access too.

Conversations were ongoing with UDC (who were under new council direction in RFU) and we were currently trying to have them adopt a Flagship policy, to secure land close to SW to build a Multi-Sports Hub encompassing a place the Club could call home.

The running track had notionally commenced work in March 2019, but until now a limited amount of land had been cleared. The Striders were to be invited to an MOD (Ministry of Defence) hosted meeting in the New Year to review how the Striders, along with the Walden Tri/Velo/Yak Yak and Mo Parks whose ambition was to setup an Athletics club for Saffron Walden, could work together to make the best use of the new running track..

The club was working closely with Mo, as both the Saffron Striders and Saffron Walden Athletics Club, could derive mutual benefit from one another in terms of endurance based sessions on the running surface for Striders and Track/Field Athletes alike.

Ali reported that the club had held 2 very popular "Club away dates" at SW Cricket Club, we were thankful for the kind invitation from David Barrs. In lieu of any facilities becoming available in the short term the club would like to continue to build the relationship with SWCC, alongside a view to host more club nights in the Spring/Summer months where daylight would permit, some new routes starting in Catons Lane and of course a social refreshment would be available to runners after the run.

Finally, the committee had agreed for the time being to not have a dedicated role on the Committee for Club Development and the function would sit under the Chairmanship of Alistair Cooke until such time that if a considerable amount of time would need to be dedicated to any new training facility within the club we may wish to revisit this again in the future.

c. Coaching

Mike Bradley gave his report:-

This year we had seen Keith Savill step back from coaching (but continued to be a member of the club) and Mike wanted to acknowledge Keith's influence and efforts in getting the club to where it was today in respect of encouraging and enthusiastically promoting coaching and running to the members, including the introduction of our first Beginners Groups.

The current coaches had undertaken several UKA training and development courses in the last year, so that they were now confident of being able to take over from Keith for the development of all runners from beginners groups to personal training plans for up to half marathon distance.

Mike was pleased to report that the club now had:-

- One coach qualified at Event Group Level

- Two coaches qualified at Coach in running Fitness level - this included the ability to assess Athletes and write personal training plans

- Nine coaches qualified at Leader in running fitness level - 6 of them were newly qualified in 2019

- Two coaches qualified in Sight Loss Awareness and Guided Running

The Club had a number of coaches doing courses to develop their knowledge of Movement Skills 1 & 2 in the coming year, as well as for Physical preparation.

Graeme had single handedly set up and published 16 articles on the Training tab on the Club webpage, covering subjects such as Training styles, Energy Systems, Vo2max runs etc.

Our 10 week Beginners Course had 83 attendees and over 50 of them completed the course, some of them were current Strider members who wanted to take advantage of the training programme they had developed. The success of this course was partly down to Striders encouraging friends and family to participate and sign up for the course.

This was followed with an improver's class for an additional 12 weeks which involved integrating the runners into the club runs. Mike added that they could still do with some assistance in leading these runs from Club Members.

Winter Circuits had been a great success, with huge numbers of attendees and will be held in Linton again this coming year.

Summer circuits also worked well, especially when it was arranged at Carver barracks with free access to the wide flat open spaces.

Mike added that the Hill sessions they had put on in 2019 were very popular and would be continued in 2020.

A Cross-Country taster day last Sunday had also been very popular.

Mike gave a huge thank you to all the Coaching Team who had invested their time in training and providing sessions for the club which continued to be free to members.

He finished his report by saying they were currently devising a first aid training programme specifically aimed at assisting injured runners, which all the coaches will be attending, also a first aid kit which would be carried with them at club events

Alistair gave a huge thanks to Graeme, Mike and all those involved in coaching and to all the Run Leaders as well.

d. Race Co-ordinator (5k and XC)

Martin Green gave his report:-

Cross Country Season

The club took part in 4 league xc races during 2018-2019 against and hosted by each of the following clubs:- Ware, Bishops Stortford, Saffron Striders and Harlow.

This year had seen some changes come in to effect to create parity between the ladies and mens scores. Previously the men's results were taken from the first ten finishers to cross the line and the ladies' from the first six finishers. This year it had changed to eight and eight. There was a lot of discussion and some initial concern based on previous turnout that we may not be able to find eight ladies to compete at every race. We needn't have worried as we managed to have a turn out of nearly double that for each event! These additional numbers and some great performances also enabled the ladies to finish 2nd in the league just ahead of Bishop's Stortford which was a great result. The men also came second in two of the races and could have secured that position overall if it wasn't for an unfortunately poor result at Harlow.

There were also some notable individual performances. In particular, Andy Mynott was 1st MV40 for the series again (best 3 races score), Ian McDougall 1st MV50 and James Hewlett 1st MV70. For the ladies, Fiona Halls convincingly won the FV45 age category with a 1st in that age category at every event.

5k league. Highlights for the 2019 races

This was the 16th year that the league has been run with the 6 clubs; Cambridge & Coleridge AC, Cambridge Triathlon Club, Haverhill RC, Newmarket Joggers, Ely Runners and Saffron Striders RC participating. In addition we've also had two guest clubs (Royston Runners and Histon & Impington RC) trialling the league at three of the events. Although participation from

the Royston Runners wasn't particularly large, I think the inclusion was seen by all as a positive thing and we are currently looking at ways of incorporating them in to the league properly. 2019 team winners are once again Cambridge & Coleridge. The Striders held their own with strong performances and our biggest turnout ever at our home race, with 113 runners. The men finished joint 5th with Newmarket Joggers and the women were 4th ahead of Cambridge Tri Club and Newmarket Joggers which was a good improvement on last year. Cambridge & Coleridge did win all the team prizes, but there were still some really great performances from our own runners. The club awards for the best overall performances went to Paula Thurston and Mark Frow. Paula and Mark were two of only 11 Striders to run all six 5ks. Both Mark and Paula set a number of PBs along the way, knocking a full minute off their times over the course of the season, so both awards very well deserved. We were very happy to receive a grant from the disbanding of GCAN which enabled the league to purchase extra tokens for the race finishers and also a new portable PA system to be used for pre-race briefings that we trialled at the Fast 5 event to great success.

Fast 5

On the 13th October the third Saffron Striders Fast 5 was run. This year the course was officially measured by EA and as such all the results were now included in RunBritain Rankings and Power of 10 Calculations for UK Athletes and will be for the next 10 years! The day itself turned out to be pretty windswept and stormy which affected the turnout a little, however, even so it was a great success with over 170 runners taking part and 50 in the children's race. Photo of the day went to whoever the mystery runner was in the Seymour costume!

There was a trophy for Patrick Bickerton who was 3rd male, and placed age group finishes for Zib Gotto, Margit Wendelberger-James, Graeme Loudain and Matt Billis.

Massive thanks goes out to the organising committee, Fiona, Rebecca, Kate, Alan and Al and also all the marshalls and helpers that helped make the event a success. A special mention also goes to Mark Thackstone for help transporting the tables and to Carol Bradley who saved the day at the last minute providing shuttle runs of hot water to the venue from her home.

Championship

The championship had been very popular this year with nearly 60 runners having competed in at least two qualifying races and 165 appearing on the score board which is a significant proportion of our membership. All 10 of the 10 races have already been run with June Brenan heading the table as we head towards the final points available at the Ware XC event in a couple of weeks. It looks like she may win her second championship in a row, however, it can all change!

A massive thank you must go to Kate Holden and Chris Dodge for all their work in processing all of the results.

Alistair thanked Martin for all his hard work in doing the Race Co-ordinator role

e. Welfare

Mike Bradley gave his report:-

He was pleased to report that the Club now had a new female welfare officer in Paula Thurston, who replaced Helen Hewlett.

It was the Club's intention to run a raffle at the Club Annual Dinner to raise funds for the Welfare fund. This was a separate amount of money which was there to support any member of the club who may need some anonymous financial support. The Club would consider assistance for anyone in the club that wrote to either Mike or Paula to let them know what they needed assisted funding for and why. They would then assess their request and send them up to 75% of the cost of Club fees, race entries up to 3 races and running shoes and Club Kit.

They had have received only two requests for support in 2019 and had provided funds for some new running shoes and assisted a member with fees.

They had also distributed ICE tags to all members of the club who wished to have them and included them for all attendees at the beginners course.

Alistair thanked both Mike and Paula for all their hard work in doing the Welfare role

f. Social

Lisa Plumb gave her report:-

Last year was brought to a close after the AGM with the annual Tinsel Run that ended with a gathering in the market square. At least 50 striders, many in fancy dress or festively decorated with fairy lights or tinsel, took part in a much shortened town circuit to take in some of the festive lights dotted around various homes and buildings finishing with mulled wine and mince pie in the Market Square. They then drew names from hats for the London Marathon places and the best fancy dress efforts were awarded with a bottle of wine each. Lisa said we would be doing the same on Tuesday 17th December and that she hoped many would be there to join in on this fun event!

She reported that in February 2019 the Annual Dinner took place at Saffron Walden Golf Club. This was the third occasion the Club had held the annual bash there and it went so well that Lisa had already confirmed our booking for 2020 to take place at a slightly later date this time on the 28 February. There were nearly 80 in attendance at the last bash so she was hoping for greater numbers again next time around trusting that many of the new Striders from this years' beginners intake would be joining us. Maybe the stakes would be raised at this next Annual dinner in respect of the games (only heads and tails - nothing too challenging!), a raffle plus Chairmans, Club Captains & Coaches awards! For those of you who had not been before.... don't worry we won't make you dance as many of you did at the 30th anniversary celebrations!

Before I comment on the anniversary party I'll just recap on the annual pasta party where we filled the top section of The Gate in Thaxted Road. Just under 30 of us were there to congratulate or offer encouragement for those that were running or had run in recent marathons. Again an annual event that gives a land mark point in the Striders calendar. The annual medal parade is proving to be popular.

And lastly, as already mentioned, we danced the night away at Swards End Village Hall to a Cambridge Ceilidh band. The 30th anniversary celebrations kick started on the day with a trail run organised by Rebecca & many Striders later returned to really put their fitness to the test being put through their paces by The Magogs Ceilidh band! We had a sumptuous buffet and a bar provided by our very own Tony Kelly.

The party did take some organising so I have been off the radar for a while in terms of Striders social activities.... But, as already mentioned, next in the calendar is the Tinsel Run and then we have something to look forward to soon into the New Year with the annual dinner. Lisa finished by saying she was always happy for others to put forward any social activities ideas and she would gladly help with any arranging for ideas other individuals may have.

Alistair thanked Lisa for the great job she is doing as the Club's Social Secretary

g. Kit

Paula Thurston introduced herself as Kit Officer, having taken this role over from Helen Hewlett. She did not have much to report other than to remind people that was the person to contact should they need any hoodies, vests etc.

Alistair thanked Paula for taking on the kit role

h. Publicity

Ali read out Simon Chamber's report in Simon's absence:-

He said it had been an excellent year for highlighting the successes of Striders in the local press. Coverage over the last 12 months had included the London Marathon, the Beginners Course and our own Fast 5 race. A big thank you to everyone whose photos Simon had stolen and used in both The Reporter and Walden Local. Simon also commented that the contributions Striders made on their Facebook pages and the Club's Facebook pages was invaluable and often formed the basis of his press releases. He wanted to give Kate a v big thank you and said that without her fabulous work in recording results his life would be ten times harder.

Competition for space on the back pages usually came from successes by the tri-club and local athletes who weren't Strider members. He said that in order to have a better chance of gaining publicity, we should keep the photos coming as this seemed to improve the chances of an article being accepted.

For the year ahead, there's was still the final championship race to look forward to and to write about and Simon would endeavour to promote this Spring's beginners group which was such a wonderful advert for the club. Towards the Autumn, no doubt our local Fast 5 race would need plenty of publicity in the local rags.

Once again he thanked everyone for their contributions, both in written and photographic form.

His finished by saying enjoy your running and every success over the next 12 months.

Alistair thanked Simon for all his hard work in doing the Publicity role

i. IT/Web Support

Alistair read out Kate Holden's report in her absence. Points to note:-

She wanted to thank to everyone for running so many races this year!! It had certainly kept her busy!

Up to 30th November, Saffron Striders had run over 200 different races, up by 50 races compared to this time last year.

206 Striders had completed at least one event, with at least 50 Striders completing 10 or more events. Tony Bacon topped the table, having run 37 races, with Alan Jones and Tina Hamilton both on 31.

This worked out at 1366 individual race results, a total distance of 32,528 km (or 20,212 miles).

Kate thanked Chris Dodge for doing the Club Championship results, and website maintenance. The website and results database had now moved to a new server, so everything was much faster...like us!

Graeme Loudain had contributed some great content to the website on training, pace comparisons, race plans and much more. Thank you Graeme for your contributions and on-going support. This had really made the website the 'go-to' resource for all running related information.

Thank you to Ann Walker for keeping the race calendar up to date.

Kate also asked if any Striders participate in any races that were not local, that they let her know via the email link on the home page of the website. She said please use this it as it is a

great help. Note some races do not give club affiliations in their results and with so many members she did not always spot new names, so please let her know if your results are missing.

She said she had been successful in getting a number of articles published in the Saffron Walden Flyer, a free magazine, which is distributed to every home in the Saffron Walden area, this was a great way of getting some free publicity for the club.

She finished by saying if anyone would like to write some articles for this and/or the newsletter articles or suggestions are always welcome and wished everyone even more success in 2020.

Alistair thanked Kate for all her hard work in doing the IT/Web Support role

6. Voting on the proposal of the Committee that the AGM confirms the adoption of the Constitution and Rules of Saffron Striders Running Club

Ali reported that the Club had evolved a lot recently and that the Committee had agreed to adopt a new Constitution and Rules of Saffron Striders Running Club. On 10th April 2019 the new Constitution and Rules of Saffron Striders Running Club were sent out to all members and published on our website. No comments or objections were made to these and they therefore came into effect on 17th April 2019.

A vote was taken at the AGM that the Club should adopt the Constution and Rules which was unanimously in favour.

7. Election of the Executive Officers

- **Chairman**
- **Treasurer**
- **Secretary**

Ali said that the Constitution set out that the Executive Officers roles need to be filled first,

Nominations, each with two seconders, had been received as follows

Chairman – Alistair Cooke. Proposed by – Alan Jones, Seconded by – Graeme Loudain
Treasurer – Ian MacDougall. Proposed by – Wendy McDougall, Seconded by – Rose Conlon
Secretary – Fiona Halls. Proposed by – Kate Holden, Seconded by – Alan Jones

As there was only one nomination for each role, a vote was not necessary and Alistair, Ian and Fiona were elected.

8. Election of the Committee Members

The Executive Officers had determined the Committee should be made up of the following roles

Coaching
Membership
Social
Mens Captain
Ladies Captain
Communication
Kit
Race

All of these roles had been notified to members when the agenda was circulated before the AGM. One nomination had been received for each of these roles, except for Ladies Captain. Under the Constitution, a committee member may only have one committee role, so as Fiona was already Secretary she could not also hold the committee role of Ladies Captain as she had done before.

As there was only one nomination for each role, a vote was not necessary (but was taken) and the following were elected.

Coaching – Mike Bradley
Membership – Graeme Loudain
Social – Lisa Plumb
Mens Captain – Alan Jones
Ladies Captain - Vacant
Communication – Kate Holden
Kit – Paula Thurston
Race – Martin Green

No-one present at the AGM was nominated for the role of Ladies Captain, so Fiona very kindly agreed to carry out the duties of the Ladies Captain until such time as one was appointed.

9. Voting on resolutions proposed by members

Alistair reported that no resolutions had been received by members prior to the meeting

10. Any Other Business

Fast 5

Sam Sheibel had written prior to the AGM and said that he thought introducing pacers to our Fast 5 race would help to encourage entries and he volunteered to be one of these pacers

Sam was keen to be involved in joining the Fast 5 Committee

Sam also suggested that a pre-race course clean up to include filling potholes, sweeping away puddles would be a v good idea and also to think about having race tshirts race than medals as the momento for the 2020 race.

Action: Alan to invite Sam to our first race meeting

The Fast 5 Committee also welcomed any suggestions from members to help with race advertising for 2020.

Finally Alistair thanked Fiona for doing a great job of being Club Secretary and for once again recording the AGM minutes. He very kindly gave a gift to Fiona, as well as to Dave Barr and for opening up the Cricket Club and running the bar for our AGM. Ali also thanked everyone for coming to the AGM.

The meeting was declared closed at 21.35