

Annual Report
2022-2023
Presented at AGM
Saturday 25th March 2023

Reference and Administration Details

Charity Name

North Belfast Harriers

Registered with Charity Commission of NI

NIC100382

Charity registered with the Inland Revenue

Charity Address

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North Belfast Harriers

Committee Members & Office Bearing Position

Margaret Stephens

Chair Person

Greg McClure

Treasurer

Denise Rainey

Secretary

Diane Taylor

Seamus McCann

North Belfast Harriers Report: 2022-2023

Agenda

1. Election of Committee for Incoming Year
2. Presentation by Paul Sheridan
3. Junior Report - Seamus McCann
4. Senior Report – John Black
5. Annual Review of Club Achievements & Development Plan –Margaret Stephens
6. Membership fees and other sources of income
7. Public Benefit Review

Election of committee members for the incoming year

At the outset of the meeting the election of the incoming committee took place

The following committee members did not stand for re-election:-

The committee members elected and their positions are as follows:-

Mrs Margaret Stephens - Chairperson

Denise Rainey - Secretary

Mr Greg McClure - Treasurer

Mrs Diane Taylor

Mr Seamus McCann

New Committee Member

Martin McNicholl

Fionnuala O'Hare

Annual Review of Club Achievements and Development Plan

Presented by Margaret Stephens

2022-2023 has been another year of consolidation for North Belfast Harriers during which the club focused on addressing a number of physical infrastructure issues. The club continues to thrive in all areas from our Junior Section, through our vibrant Recreational Section to our Senior and Masters Sections. These sections continue to be supported in their growth and development by an ever increasing group of dedicated and knowledgeable coaches and volunteers who dedicate endless hours in support of our runners. We are very lucky to have such dedicated support both in coaching and in the other areas required for the effective running of the club and I feel that it is very important that these people are acknowledged and thanked formally in this forum. I would therefore propose a formal record of thanks to all club volunteers to go on record in the official minutes of this meeting.

Could I ask for someone from the body of the meeting to second this proposal? Seconded by Denise Rainey.

In addition to all the volunteers it is important to remember that no matter how good the facilities or the coaches are the work has to be done by each individual to achieve results. Irrespective of whether these results involve i.e. breaking a world record, setting a new Personal Best in any run or completing your first 5k or 10k or indeed your 500th Parkrun for that matter these are all causes for celebration and for pride in our club members.

Club Objectives

Our club objectives are listed in our constitution as:

- To promote the health and well-being principally but not exclusively of the greater Belfast population through participation in athletics.
- To promote personal health and esteem through health awareness education and participation in athletic principally but not exclusively to the Greater Belfast population
- To promote athletics locally as an amateur sport to the local population of North Belfast.

We seek to achieve these objectives through delivering results against our action plan and we have just completed the second year of the development plan that was drawn up in 2021.

The Development Plan highlighted a number of specific areas - coaching, junior, recreational, senior, international and infrastructure and the following is an outline of progress in each area:-

COACHING

We have seen great success in developing our coaching team on the junior side of the club in the last year with 7 newly qualified Assistant coaches joining the team, and a number of parents helping at other levels (more details in Junior report)

What we need to do is to find a formula that will work within the senior part of the club that will replicate this success for the benefit of all our senior members. At present we have an effective structure in some areas but not in others. At the Couch to 5k level and through a number of recreational groups we have a structure and leadership that has allowed for groups to thrive and for effective training to happen. At the top end in the club we have the necessary coaching structure but there is a significant area between these two where we have a gap and we need to find a way to fill that gap with sufficient numbers of leaders/coaches of the required quality. People who have an interest in delivering, to a plan, for both themselves and the people in their training group.

Aim for year ahead:

We will seek to maintain and further develop the strong structure that we have built in the junior section.

Seek out solutions for the senior sections and implement these with the support of the senior members of the club developing LIRFs and CIRFs where possible and empowering leadership within training groups to deliver the programs that people are seeking based on established and proven training plans.

PARTICIPATION

Whilst on the surface our recovery from covid is almost complete and more recent events have seen an increased participation from club members and we have seen some notable successes in competition (more on this in other reports) we need to focus on this and club togetherness moving forward.

Recent successes and increased attendance at certain events has been boosted in the early part of 2023 by the formation of a Cross Country Committee on the initiative of a small number of club members and they should be commended for this action

Aim for year ahead:

Promote continued growth in participation in all events. Re-introduce the club's event participation scheme. Develop the concept underpinning the new XC Committee who meet monthly to identify target races and encourage participation at these events, ensuring that the club profile remains high which encourages new members to join the club

RECREATIONAL

The recreational side of the club continues to thrive with coach lead training sessions weekly on Monday & Wednesday evenings again we need to encourage and train more coaches these sessions are attended regularly by upwards of 80 members and it is important to note that this number does not include those who are participating in one of the club's two C25K – we have seen a decline in participants since Covid.

Recreational runners have represented the club in the past year in all distances from 5k to the full marathon distance.

Aim for the year ahead:

To encourage groups to make more use of the clubhouse on week nights and Sunday mornings supporting development of runners in this section and provide them with as much variety as possible in order to retain their interest and progression.

Encourage better communication between groups to allow people from different groups to participate in runs/sessions that might suit their needs at a particular time and to encourage cohesions between the various groups in this part of the club.

SENIOR

The senior end of club has once again had a positive year with some outstanding performances for both teams and individuals. (More details below in senior report).

Aim for the year ahead:

Continue to support the needs of the Senior section. Encourage the use of the clubhouse as a focal point for training sessions that are not track based. Seek out effective leadership and coaching for all elements of this part of the club

INTERNATIONAL

To have club representation on an international level

The club continues to strive to help its athletes achieve qualification for national teams and allow them opportunities to compete at the highest levels in all forms of running, from Track to Road Running to Fell Running and we continue to have success at this level.

Aim for the year ahead:

Continue to support club representation at an international level

JUNIOR

2022 has been a successful year for the Junior section with a second programme run with St Edna's GAA club (more details to follow in the Junior Report). There continues to be good attendance throughout the year at training sessions.

Aim for year ahead:

- Continue to support junior members of club through investing in coaching and supporting competitions.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Another aim of the club is to ensure that the club is managed in a safe, sustainable and professional manner. North Belfast Harriers is registered with the Charity Commission of Northern Ireland and also Athletics NI. Therefore, the committee has continually reviewed practice throughout the year to ensure that we are abiding by up-to-date guidelines/ practice of both bodies. Our accounts were independently examined by an accountant (see financial report) and were of satisfactory standard. The financial report shows the club income covers annual expenses and that there are sufficient resources to address occasional expenses that arise.

The club continues to be managed on a voluntary basis by the committee, who also act as the trustees.

Club Fees

As in previous years the club have given consideration to the financial position of the club and the financial reserves that are required to ensure that it meets potential financial needs and allows for it to operate within the constraints of its charitable status.

The committee **proposes that** we hold the annual fees at £60 adult £40 Junior with a reduced rate for new members in their first year of £40

We would once again ask that all Tax Payers consider signing up for gift aid. By doing so the Inland Revenue will pay an additional £12 into club fees at no additional cost to the individual. It's as simple as ticking the relevant box when you are renewing your membership. Please take that action.

At this point we would like to propose that the fees remain at £60 for adults and £40 for children for the coming year with a first year membership fee at the reduced rate of £40.

Membership is now due!!!

- Membership year is now over so all fees are due for renewal.
- Payment can be made via the membership link on the club website which will now be open or directly (<https://membermojo.co.uk/nbh>.)
- Special arrangements can be made for those in financial difficulties. This will be dealt with in a completely confidential manner.
- Any issues/queries please contact John Black via membership@northbelfastharriers.com

We would thank all members who have already renewed their membership

Review of Public Benefit Statement

One of the club obligations as a charity is to ensure that our club is fulfilling its obligations with regards to public benefit. Below we have detailed our club aims and how we have met them this year and how the public has benefited.

Our club objectives are listed in our constitution as:

- 1. To promote the health and well-being principally but not exclusively of the greater Belfast population through participation in athletics.**

Despite the restrictions of covid we have conducted programs suited to all abilities and we have encouraged all to further their health through athletics. Programs have been marketed locally and there are programs targeted at youth, beginners, 5-10k, half marathon and marathon programs. All the programs are connected to supply a pathway for progression. The achievements of these groups are listed in the annual review.

We are satisfied that the club has offered the opportunity for improved health well-being to the local community during 2022-2023 year.

- 2. To promote personal health and esteem through health awareness education and participation in athletic principally but not exclusively to the Greater Belfast population**

Within each program, the objectives are to promote fitness, personal health and self-esteem. We actively encourage people to engender confidence and we provide opportunities to experience new challenges like cross country, half marathons, marathons, Pilates and core training.

The opportunity for our training nights to provide members with the opportunity to mix for many other members socially, to make new friends and to promote their own mental health, has been limited due to Covid but with the lifting of restrictions we will be able to gather in greater numbers

In 2022/23 we have seen:

- around 150 people graduate from beginner's programs at Girls Model and ERC and Waterworks
- Covid Reduced numbers - Mon – Thurs we are working to return to pre Covid numbers and see somewhere in the region of 100 people with at least 10 coaches and volunteers attending each night
- A return of the increased participation numbers

There was little opportunity to organise club outings, social opportunities were greatly reduced i.e. the Christmas dinner and the children's summer camp and Christmas party were all cancelled due to Covid restrictions. We did however organise a family day to celebrate the 125 anniversary of the club this was an outdoor event with the club providing a barbecue and members bringing tray bakes this was proved to be a great teambuilding exercise. It is hoped that we will succeed in increasing the number of social opportunities during the course of the coming year.

We are again satisfied that the above evidence demonstrates that the club continues to provide public benefit and promote personal health and esteem through athletics helping people gain an awareness of health education.

3. To promote athletics locally as an amateur sport to the local population of North Belfast.

During the year, the club continuously promotes the activities and achievements of the club to the local community to illustrate the possible benefits. This is done through:

- Weekly reports on website and shared to Facebook
- Reports and features in local newspapers
- An active twitter account
- Awards and presentations- limited due to Covid

We are again satisfied that the above evidence demonstrates that the club fulfilled its public benefit and promoted athletics locally as an amateur sport to the local population of North Belfast.