

Welcome Back!

This has become a hat-trick – the third very occasional newsletter from Balsall Common Run Club.

This edition includes the usual round- up of activity by the club and its members – events, charity and what we have generally been up to.

Our AGM was on Monday 28 April – once again we had a very high attendance level so many thanks to those who were able to make it. For those who weren't there, and as a reminder to those who were, this edition includes highlights from the meeting – report from last year and our plans for this next year. On the whole we seem to be doing most things right from our members' perspective but, as ever, the Committee and our Run Leaders are always keen to hear what you think at any time – just give any of us a shout.

We were pleased to be able to reduce our annual subscriptions for this year reflecting the healthy financial position of the Club and as a reward to our loyal and valued members who are renewing with us. Its great to know that ,as we speak, the vast majority of members have chosen to renew for another year – thank you!

Our fees remain competitive compared to other local clubs and we hope we continue to offer something different in terms of balancing supporting your individual running ambitions whilst remaining focussed on inclusivity, friendship and the social aspects of the Club.



Running Matters

“Informals”

Our Monday and Wednesday informal sessions have proved popular, and we hope to keep those going subject to demand and run leader availability.

Track Session

Following a suggestion at last year's AGM, we were pleased to arrange an inaugural session at the athletics track at Warwick University. It was a chilly evening but, as usual, fine once we got going. Jill was on duty with the whistle as we did a brief warm up followed by some pyramid intervals, rounding off with a relay and cool down. It was positively received by members and we plan to arrange further sessions periodically during the Uni holidays when we can get exclusive use of the track. Thanks also to Umang for arranging a curry afterwards which gave a nice social end to the evening.

Plans for next year

- We need more leaders to give us flexibility and reduce reliance on the relatively small number of members who lead regularly – please step forward and speak to a member of the Committee if you're interested.



- We expect to launch an on-line portal for the sale of kit.
- Having reviewed our Thursday sessions to add more variety we are trialling distance rather than pace-based groups on Saturday mornings. We hope this allows you to mix up your distance, better supports you with your training plans and is more inclusive in terms of accommodating members who don't necessarily want to run 10k every week.
- We are considering introducing a 'guest pass' so that members can bring adult friends or family along occasionally.
- Other plans – we will look to hold more track sessions during the Warwick Uni holidays (next one booked for 21 July), and are likely to arrange follow up FastAid (or other First Aid) courses for members who missed out earlier in the year.

Run Leaders

Congratulations to Emma Samuel who has recently completed the UK Athletics Leadership in Running Fitness qualification to become our latest run leader.

The course is mainly web-based and an interesting mix of running theory, safeguarding and first aid enabling you to lead sessions that are fun, safe and runner-centric.

We are utterly reliant on our run leaders to be able to hold sessions safely and in line with our England Athletics requirements. The Club cannot operate without them, and we are always keen for other members to take the course and swell the numbers further - please contact a member of the Committee if you are interested and remember that The Club will make a contribution towards the cost of the training.

We finally have a website

It took a while but www.balsallcommonrunclub.co.uk is up and running again.

We’ve said it before but will say it again – many thanks to Carl Spencer who navigated us through the technical mire so that we have control over the domain name and web platform which puts us back in the driving seat with a platform that is straightforward to develop and maintain.

We hope that the resurrection of the website stands us in good stead for those in, or new to, the area looking for a “small, friendly, local club” and will help attract new members over time.

We have deliberately started simple but depending on members’ views could consider further enhancements such as a logged-on members-only area. As ever it depends on what you want, the likely demand and the overhead of maintaining it - so let us have your feedback on the current content and what you would like to see and would find useful.

Fast Aid Training

A number of leaders and members along with some members of the tennis club attended a Fast Aid course organised by BCRC at the Lant. It was an enjoyable and highly informative evening with practical exercises on how to:

- put a casualty into the recovery position
- administer CPR,
- deal with a patient who is choking, and
- use a defibrillator

One Top Tip – please download the What3Words app to your phone as this describes your location to emergency services far more precisely e.g. if you are off road or out of the village.

We asked members to make a voluntary donation to FastAid which operates as a charity and the Club also donated £160 given the valuable and relevant life skills that those who attended picked up, resulting in a total donation of £280.

We are likely to arrange a further session for the autumn so other members who were unable to attend the first one can benefit, and we will once again reach out to the other affiliated clubs to help foster relationships with them and help ensure we get a good turnout to make the Fastaid volunteers’ use of time worthwhile.



Spotlight on inclusion

As a club we really want all our members, and potential members, to feel that they are welcome, represented and belong.

Finding a common interest, such as running, helps people from all walks of life to interact and form connections they might not otherwise make and being physically active in an inclusive and welcoming environment benefits everyone, not just physically but socially and mentally as well. That’s why we try to mix people of different abilities together and provide running and social activities where we can all come together as one club.

We recognise that not everyone will become best friends or have the same running ambitions, but we do ask that you all take the time to understand and appreciate each other’s differences and continue to be supportive and kind.

Annual General Meeting

Highlights of the past year

Membership	Governance	Other Developments	Running Events
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 50 paying members• Slightly up from 49 in 2023/24• 10 new joiners during the year	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• First formal AGM• New committee established – has met 4 times since last AGM• All policies refreshed• Fully compliant with EA requirements (“7/7”)• Regular Run Leader meetings• Volunteer groups for events and kit	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Two Club newsletters issued• Appearance on Balsall Common Local Radio• Club website re-established• Noticeboard to increase visibility at the Lant• Fast Aid training held for leaders and members• Inaugural track session	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Warwickshire Road Race League events• Multiple events of distances from 5k to Ultra in UK and overseas

Social	Charity	Financial
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• BCRC 10th birthday• Bermuda Triangle Event• Halloween Quiz• Curryoke• Santa Dash• New Year’s Eve• Post-track session curry night	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Myton Hospice• Hannah’s Kingdom• Balsall Common Lions• FastAid	<p>Our financial position remains sound and has allowed us to reduce fees for existing members who are renewing next year (keeping fees unchanged for new members) and gives us flexibility to invest for member benefit where there is a good case for doing so. Ideas are always welcome</p>

Last year you said ...and we did

Use of old stock	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Largely sold to members adding surplus in year (rather than donated)
Social Membership	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Not progressed - ex-members, families and friends invited to some events - no perceived demand for or benefit in social membership
Club Sponsorship	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Not taken forward due to other priorities – Committee happy to explore if a volunteer can be found to lead
Promotion of Club to new members	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Focussed on re-establishing website and promotion at the Lant.• Some promotion at village events but fairly passive so minimal interest
Days we hold Sessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Members poll held and strongly supported the status quo BUT extra ‘informal’ Monday / Wednesday sessions have proved popular
Cross County League Participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Members poll unfortunately demonstrated insufficient interest to be viable
Track Session	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• ‘Trial’ session at Warwick University well received - will likely repeat periodically but consider funding options – date in diary for 21 July 2025

Constitution and Committee

- Our members voted to approve identified changes to our constitution. These were largely ‘housekeeping’ changes related to financial management and how our disciplinary procedure and appeals process will operate. Fortunately, these have not been invoked to date and hopefully will not be needed in future, but the changes provide some clarity should the situation change
- No other candidates were put forward, so the current Committee members were pleased to be re-elected for a further term - Jill Fedeski as Chair, Nat Horlor as Secretary, Scott Meacham as Membership Secretary and Mike Pennell as Treasurer. The Committee is grateful to members for their ongoing support

Global News

Phil at the Barcelona Half Marathon



I love having a target to aim for. Over the last few years I've achieved several PBs and I was delighted to finally achieve a sub 4-hour marathon last year.

With PBs becoming harder to achieve, I've changed my running target focus from finish times to places to enjoy. I'm aiming to do two half marathons a year, starting this year with Barcelona.

The February Spanish weather was such a welcome relief from our cold winter. Including running with a holiday is a great way to sightsee the city. The course was relatively flat and goes past some of the cities best tourist attractions - I'd definitely recommend this one.

Now I need to start planning my next trip

Nigel at the Seville Half Marathon

Spain hosts its distance events during the winter months, and I signed up for the Seville Half Marathon at the end of January thinking it would be great to run in relative warmth as opposed to the often freezing conditions we "enjoy" at similar events in the UK at that time of year. There was also the attraction of going to Seville for some sightseeing and I have to say it is one of the most interesting and attractive places I have been to - definitely worth a visit.

On race day it was overcast with a light drizzle and a temperature of 13 C. I was a bit disappointed that it wasn't sunny but that was probably a good thing for the runners, and I still found myself dousing myself with water at aid stations to keep cool.

The route consisted of two loops on either side of the Guadalquivir river and, apart from bridges and an underpass, was flat. It is also run on wide roads so a good opportunity for a PB. Organisation of the event was very good, notably the way that runners were separated into proper pens at the start and released at intervals as opposed to the mass stampede I have experienced at other events.

Overall, I enjoyed the event and would definitely recommend it. Throw in the delights of Seville as a city (3000+ bars) and you have a perfect run/vacation destination.



and Emma at Sydney's Park Run!



More Events

Our members doing us proud again....
(aka the Kim and Alison show ☺)



Kim & Alison: Twin Lakes 20
(Pre & Post)



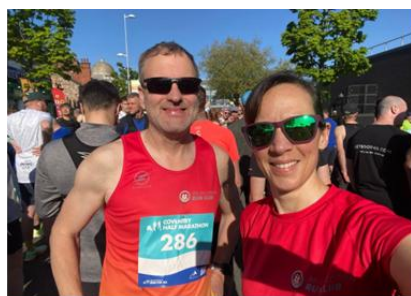
Andy at Gloucester HM
Before and after



Chris ahead of the
Manchester
Marathon (the tram
was the easy bit!)



3 at the Massey Ferguson 5



Dawn and Carl: Coventry Half
(photo of Carl's ankle
afterwards was redacted –
ouch!)



Leanne and Tim triumph at London!



Nigel: Stratford Half –
ouch again!



Lichfield Cathedral to
Castle 10 mile



Kim & Alison: Watford HM & 10k

And even more events

...because one page ain't enough!



Steve at the Milton Keynes Marathon



Carron's Falkland Yomp



Ranjit
Fradley 10



Nicky & Chris at the Warwick Half



Nicky: Cotswold
Trail Marathon



Birmingham 10k Montage: Ali, Lisa, Mel, Umang and Steven

Charity Fundraising

As a Club we are very proud of all the effort our members make to raise money for charitable causes each year. We are also very keen to support these efforts so, if you are raising money for charity through a specific running/run club related event and you would like us to champion this either through publicity or a social event, please talk to a Committee member or speak with the events sub-committee as appropriate.

In addition, we would love to get an idea of how much club members raise for charity each year, through such events. If you're happy to share this information please keep an approximate total of what you raise between now and the end of the club year in March 2026, and then share this amount direct with a member of the Committee.

Games Night!



We celebrated the new Club Year and Hannah's completion of an epic fund-raising trek across the Sahara with a games evening at the Lant. Hannah covered 50k in four days across sand dunes and in temperatures exceeding 40C to raise money for Hannah's Kingdom towards brain tumour research. The Club is so proud of Hannah's achievement, and we were able to raise more money on the night with a fun evening that started with a short run and stop off at the chippy for sustenance and then included:

- Bingo
- Pin the tail on the camel
- A very serious (☺) Connect 4 knockout competition, and
- Kerplunk, Jenga and Play your cards right.

A good time was had by all with money raised for a great cause. You can read more about Hannah's inspiring story and donate at :[A big welcome to Hannah's Kingdom – Brain Tumour Research](#)



Rhys Goes Loopy

Rhys will be taking on Le Loop in June – over 3 weeks he will cycle all 21 stages of the Tour de France route but a week ahead of the prestigious cycling event itself.

Rhys is raising money for the William Wates Memorial Trust which supports projects that encourage young people experiencing severe disadvantage to keep away from anti-social behaviour and criminal activity, enabling them to fulfil their potential.

You can read more and donate to Rhys's cause at the following with all monies raised going to the trust. All the best for the mountains Rhys!

<https://fundraising.wwmt.org/fundraisers/rhysmainwaring>



Easter



Thursday 17 April saw an Easter-themed run around the village to spot Easter-themed 'treasure' planted in some members' gardens and was followed by sweet treats back at the Lant. Thanks to Ali for her artistic creations and Nigel for organising the route to suit.

BCRC Turns 11

The Club turned 11 years old on Saturday 26 April – and what better excuse to finish our Saturday morning session with a celebratory stop off at the Fisheries, Lavender Hall, for brekky.

