

Darwen Dashers AGM Minutes 20 March 2025

Apologies: Becky Jepson, Gareth Taylor, Sam Dickinson, Alex Buckland, Andy McAllister, Gary Taylor, Jez Turner, Elaine Turner and Don Clarkson.

Attendees: Andy Haworth, Debbie Ashton, Allan Harle, Sarah Marsden, Rick Marsden, Jim Taylor, Gareth Davies, Chris Cash, Josh Turner, Heather Turner, Brian Morris, Alison Abbott, Diane Dudgeon, Rebecca Simms, Iain Asher, Jill Marr, Phil Seddon, Ian Thompson.

Chairman opened meeting at 8:30pm welcoming attendees and going through protocol. 2024 minutes were agreed by all.

Chairman's Report:

It's a pleasure to present this Chairman's Report and reflect on an exciting and productive year for our committee and club. We've faced our fair share of challenges, but together, we've achieved so much and built a strong foundation for an even brighter future.

This year has been a hive of activity for the committee. Some key highlights include:

- Holding 11 monthly committee meetings (taking a well-earned break in December!).
- Keeping members informed with timely distribution of minutes.
- Strengthening communication channels with our members.
- Establishing two dedicated sub-committees to expertly handle the half-marathon event.
- Achieving full EA compliance—what a milestone!
- Launching our shiny new website.
- Sustaining our membership numbers—a testament to our vibrant club community.
- Maintaining financial stability while carefully managing resources to support all our activities.

The heart of our club is its members, and this year has been bursting with energy and camaraderie.

The coming year holds so much promise, and we can't wait to get started! Our priorities and aspirations include:

- Continuing to maintain strong governance.
- Take stock of club assets so we can make the most of them.
- Raising the club's profile while promoting membership and inclusion.
- Supporting our members in achieving their goals.
- Supporting Ady's Challenge.

- Delivering an outstanding Darwen Half Marathon on 6th April 2025 (and beyond!).
- Exploring the return of the Don Ashton Memorial Fell Race.
- Exploring a Darwen Dashers Tough 10K race
- Building stronger links with the wider community, such as Blacksnape, Sunnyhurst
- member suggestions to make our club even better, more than welcome
- **DHM update** 130 entries total costs £4170 revenue £4550 = in profit £380 – likely to vary...

I'd like to express my heartfelt thanks to our incredible committee members, volunteers, and supporters for their dedication and hard work. This year, we bid farewell to four valued committee members—Allan, Debbie, Mark, and Jim. Debbie, Debbie has made an extraordinary impact—thank you!

I'm immensely grateful for the ongoing support of our members. Together, we've had an amazing year, and I'm excited to see all we can achieve in the year ahead. Thank you everyone.

Finally, there's just one more thing. Want to do this now in case we overrun, and people need to leave.

I received a suggestion from Simon Fox which I have agreed. In Simon's words ***"It was Jim that encouraged me to join the club many years ago, he always marshals at my race and has been such a huge stalwart and supporter of the club and all things Dashers."***

In my words and on behalf of our members - For countless years, Jim Taylor has been the beating heart of the Dashers. His steadfast commitment, infectious energy, and genuine warmth have defined the very spirit of our community. Tonight, whilst we are gathered for the AGM, we should take the opportunity to celebrate his remarkable accomplishments and honour the many ways he has touched our lives.

Jim has gifted us with unforgettable memories. We all have stories to share—tales of his triumphs, the ways he has profoundly impacted us, and, of course, his humorous adventures and misadventures. His humour is one of his most charming traits, making him the subject of many jokes, and his strength and resilience in facing personal challenges has shown us what it means to rise above and beyond and lead by example.

Jim's influence extends far beyond the trails, fells, road and races. He is a mentor, a friend, and a constant source of encouragement. From easing the nerves of first-time runners to rallying the club before major events, his kindness and generosity have inspired us all to pursue personal excellence—not just as runners but as individuals.

Fellow members pay tribute to Jim, inspired by his thoughts, words, and deeds. He reminds us of what it truly means to be part of something special. Because of Jim, our running club isn't just a group of individuals. It's a place where everyone feels welcomed, valued, and motivated to chase their dreams.

Jim, on behalf of all of us who've had the privilege of sharing miles, smiles and memories with you, thank you. Thank you for your unwavering dedication, your compassion, and the joy you bring to this

club. Your legacy lives with us in the friendships, the milestones you've celebrated with us, and the enduring spirit you've instilled in every stride we take.

Here's to celebrating you today and for all the miles yet to come. You are truly a man, a myth, and a legend, and it is with great honour that we award you a Lifetime Honorary Member of the Darwen Dashers Running Club.

Road Captain's Report:

Rick Marsden reported that eighteen males and fifteen females took part in the 2024 Road Championships.

First place male was Mark Taylor, second place Rick Marsden and third place Gareth Taylor.

First place female was Sue Corsini, second place Sarah Marsden and third place Julie Smith.

Rick reported that there have been seven races done in the new championship with the eighth at the weekend being Pendle 5 Mile Trail Race and the ninth race being the Calderdale 10 Miler. Thirty two Dashers have taken part in the new championships so far this year and we are getting good groups at the races.

He thanks all taking part and to keep up the good work.

For the £20.00 received from Blackburn Road Runners for the free place Rick proposed that we donate this to Ady Humphrys towards his goal to raise £10,000.00 for Prostate Cancer UK. Seconded by Andy Haworth and motion carried.

Fell Captain's Report:

Gareth Davies reported eighteen males and nine females took part in 2024 fell championships. There have been a few more Fell members at the younger end and the highlights were the Hodgson Brother Relays and British Fell and Hill relays at Burnsall. Overall it has been a good year. Gareth also congratulated Andy Haworth on a job well done as Chairman coming in on the back of Chris Cash as they were big boots to fill. He also pointed out that Alison Abbott got the ball rolling with the England Athletics Standards and Mark did a lot of work to get the club where it is now with the standards.

Beginners Captain's Report:

Jim Taylor reporting that there has been two groups of beginners with the first one only one lady turning up. However, this last ten week course eleven people graduated on Saturday 11 March and five came on Tuesday and ran with Jim's off road improvers group. He hopes we will have potentially eight new members from this last beginners group.

Jim announced that he is stepping down as Beginner's Captain as it is getting too much for him to run on Tuesday, do the beginners group on Wednesday, run on Thursday and do races in-between. He thanked Alison Abbott and Brian Morris for continuing as Beginners Run Leaders. Andy Haworth asked Alison and Brian keep the committee updated on the Beginner's courses going forward which they agreed to do.

President's Report:

Sarah Marsden reported - Well what a year it has been. I'll start by saying a big thank you to you all for your continued support throughout the year and with the fundraising events such as East Lancs Hospice 10k and honouring Cameron with the fun filled treasure hunt. I hope you will all get behind Ady with his challenge with his Prostate charity.

I'd also like to thank Brian Morris for his teeth gritting hill reps and Simon Smith for compiling Get to Know a Dasher, Jez and Elaine Turner for their monthly Parkrun Dash and Breakfast which brings me on to Ian Thompson for running our own Parkrun Championship and which has been an excellent read. I also intend to bring back the April miles, but it won't be in April. Obviously all this would not be possible without you all. I hope to hear member's thoughts and ideas on more events we can put on.

The club runs have seen on average fifteen to twenty runners with Tuesday night leading the charge. With the nights getting lighter I hope there will be more in attendance.

Welfare Report:

Sarah Marsden reported - Since stepping in as Welfare Officer I have completed the England Athletics training so that we could tick another box off going forward as we had to have a Welfare office in place by the end of March.

Up to press you have all been good although I really wouldn't be allowed to say otherwise. Although I am Welfare Officer, it is up to us all to be aware of each other's welfare from reporting any concerns to just re-connecting with others. This might be just a simple word like are you okay? How are you? Or are you well? Which, sometimes is all that is needed to show that you care or thinking about them or for someone to be heard. If there is concern or something that just doesn't sit right then the Welfare Officer is there to guide you. Please look at this on England Athletics Club Hub.

Treasurer's Report: Balance as at 18.03.25

Community Account: £2,370.94

Savings Account: £1,975.74

ACTIVITY	CREDIT	DEBIT	DIFFERENCE
Aggies Staircase Race 2024	£700.00	£187.50	£512.50
AGM 2024	£0.00	£123.60	-£123.60
AGM 2025	£0.00	£75.00	-£75.00
Bank Charges	£0.00	£4.25	-£4.25
<i>(Lloyds bank have transferred the main account to a community account. This incurs a monthly fee of £4.25. Allan suggesting Committee might want to look at moving the account. Chairman will take a look at this).</i>			
Dark Un Race - 2024	£716.42	£716.42	£0.00
Dark Un Race - 2025	£681.10	£61.68	£619.42
<i>(Remaining money (£619.42) to be split & donated to Bolton Mountain Rescue & the RNLI).</i>			
Darwen Half Costs	£1,357.20	£1,797.20	-£440.00
<i>(£1,357.20 transferred from savings account to cover costs of T-Shirts).</i>			
David Staff Race 2024	£372.75	£372.75	£0.00
<i>(Donations made to CRY £252.75 & Bolton Mountain Rescue £120.00).</i>			
EA Affiliation	£0.00	£200.00	-£200.00
ELH - Refund	£0.00	£33.00	-£33.00
Membership	£1,423.53	£0.00	£1,423.53
Race Fees	£0.00	£673.50	-£673.50
Race Refund	£20.00	£0.00	£20.00
Red Rose Cross Country	£22.50	£150.00	-£127.50
Subscription	£0.00	£290.90	-£290.90
<i>(These include website domain costs (including transfer to new provider) & PLOTAROUTE software subscription).</i>			
Training	£0.00	£90.00	-£90.00
<i>(These are new costs, to ensure we conform to EA guidelines).</i>			
Xmas Party	£603.00	£1,737.00	-£1,134.00
Grand Total	£5,896.50	£6,512.80	-£616.30

Secretary's Report:

Debbie Ashton reporting 2023 - 2024 membership was 74 members compared to this year with 101 members for 2024 - 2025, with one member resigning just last week due to ill health. This brings membership for the end of this membership year up by 26 members.

We have 78 England Athletics affiliated members which was enough for 1 club place for the London marathon. If the London marathon criteria stays the same for next year which is 50+ E.A. members, we should have enough E.A. membership for a club place if we retain enough full membership. We have 28 Social members.

We have a couple of Jim's beginner's graduates wanting to join this year and I have had interest from a few others who have had a couple of runs with us. All in all, it has been a good year for membership.

Membership Fees 2025 – 2026

Secretary advising of the rise in EA membership from £19.00 to £20.00 for this year and proposed fees as follows:

Full EA Membership £34.00 which includes the £1.00 E.A. rise;

Full EA Beginners and Family Membership £29.00 which includes £1.00 E.A. rise;

Social Membership and Second Claim Membership to stay at £16.00.

Proposal seconded by Andy Haworth, motion carried.

Pro Rata Proposal

Secretary proposing half year pro rata membership fees for members joining from 1 October to March as follows:

Full E.A. Pro Rata Membership £28.00;

Full E.A. Pro Rata Beginners and Family Membership £24.00;

Social and Second Claim Pro Rata Membership £8.00

Proposal seconded by Sarah Marsden. Motion carried.

Election of Officials

Heather Turner put herself forward for Club/Membership Secretary. Seconded by Debbie Ashton. Motion carried.

Diane Dudgeon put herself forward for Welfare Officer. Seconded by Debbie Ashton. Motion carried.

Ian Thompson put himself forward for Treasurer. Seconded by Sarah Marsden. Motion carried.

Rebecca Simms proposed to take out the Beginner's Captain as an Official role and out of the Constitution. Chris Cash pointing out committee can co-op an Official on to the Committee if needed.

Proposal seconded by Gareth Davies. Motion carried.

No challenges were made for Chair, President, Road or Fell Captains.

Changes to Constitution

Chairman proposed changes to constitution at 9.2 to include *as per our inclusion policy* and at 16.1.1 change the word Chairman to Chair. Seconded by Debbie Ashton. Motion carried.

Christmas Party Arrangements

Gareth Davies proposing as the Christmas party makes quite a substantial loss that this year Fell and Road Groups go for a Christmas run pub to pub and meet up at the Sunnyhurst Pub for the presentation and chip butties one weekend in December. Debbie Ashton asked the question whether the Sunnyhurst would be big enough and Rebecca Simms answered that we should ask the landlady as soon as possible to close the pub for us for sole use for the presentation onwards.

Rebecca seconding the proposal. Motion Carried.

Secretary to add to April agenda for Committee to consider arrangements and contact Sunnyhurst Pub for availability.

Aggies Staircase Race

Chris Cash informing attendees that this will be his last year as Run Director and organiser of Aggies Staircase Fell Race and would like to invite FRA affiliated members interested in shadowing him this year to take over the role next year. Anyone interested must also be a paid up Darwen Dashers member.

The race usually attracts 80 - 100 runners with 80% of profits going to club funds and 20% to Bolton Mountain Rescue. The presentation will probably be at the Sound Lounge again this year.

Debbie Ashton to email members asking to contact Chris or email him for an informal chat if interested.

Social Activities

Debbie Ashton advising that she has received an email from Elaine Turner to say that she and Jez are happy to continue the monthly Parkrun Dash and Breakfast. Heather Turner stating that not everyone is on Facebook to see the dates of the monthly Parkruns. Heather will contact Elaine and Jez for dates

and committee to put dates on the Dashers website calendar. Heather to also email members asking for suggestions for any future social activities once Debbie has handed over the Secretary's role to her.

Any Other Business

Jim Taylor saying that we need someone to lead members graduating from beginners as off road is not for everyone and there are no-one leading road improvers at the moment. Debbie agreed with Jim and pointing out that some beginners feel a worried about coming up to a club night and feel that they are slowing us down. Andy advising that it will be on the next committee meeting agenda to explore how we can nurture them.

Presentation

Chairman once again thanked retiring Committee members and presented them with gifts. He also gave a gift to Jim to pass on to Mark in recognition for all his hard work for the committee and setting up the new website.

Meeting closed at 10:05pm

Minutes: Debbie Ashton