



# **Chiltern Harriers Athletic Club**

**5 Year Development Plan- October 2012-September 2017**

## Executive Summary

- Increase athlete numbers and improve retention rate of young athletes
- Increase coaching numbers and up-grades coaching qualifications
- Increase numbers of volunteers and officials
- Organise more social events, including a presentation event
- Increase school partnerships
- Improve training facilities
- Increase income from races and sponsorship
- Work towards adopting UKA awards

## **CLUB BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Chiltern Harriers A.C. was formed in 1978 at the start of the boom in road running. Since then the club has expanded to cover the whole range of athletic activities including road running, cross country and track and field athletics.

After mergers with Chalfont A C and Chesham Harriers, Chiltern Harriers is now the only athletic club in the Chiltern area and has members from all over the region, including Amersham, Chesham, The Chalfonts, Prestwood, Tring and Great Missenden etc. This catchment is gradually widening

The membership stands at some 437 paid-up members at 1/10/12 and is composed of athletes of all ages from 8 years old upwards to in excess of 70.

The club has expanded dramatically over the last 4 or 5 years, partly due to the increased interest in running and health and partly because of our successful efforts at Senior and Junior level in recruiting new members.

We are presently hampered by the lack of local athletic facilities and for over a year our athletes meet in some 15 different locations. A nearby running track is a priority. In addition, an all-weather surface and a 'field events' facility is also urgently needed.

The club is a member of the More Bucks Athletics Network and is also affiliated to several bodies including: U.K. Athletics, England Athletics, South of England Athletics Association, British Triathlon Association and Bucks Athletic Association.

## **CLUB VALUES**

- To ensure equality of opportunity in sport for all, irrespective of gender, race, ability, disability or age.
- To encourage good sportsmanship.
- To provide a safe and welcoming environment.
- To adopt and implement best practice in the Club's Codes of Practice

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

- To promote athletics in the Chiltern area.
- To provide coaching and competitive opportunities for all members in athletic disciplines.
- To provide fun and fulfilment and to deliver the potential of all our members.

## **STRATEGIC GOALS**

### Competition/Participation

- To encourage participation in and to offer well organised competitive and social opportunities across all athletic disciplines, for all our members.
- To work towards adopting UKA awards

### Membership

- To gradually increase total membership within the constraints of the facilities available and the level of coaching support.
- To retain a higher proportion of young athletes lost to the sport in their teens.

### Management/Administration

- To manage and administer the club, including the risks of conducting club activities in a competent and accountable manner.

### Maintain Financial Viability

- To competently and accountably manage the clubs finances.
- To anticipate any future financial needs particularly if there is a requirement for capital investment in facilities.

### People/Volunteer Management

- To effectively recruit, retain and recognise all club volunteers, so as to facilitate the development of the club in an efficient and professional manner.

### Facilities

- To find improved facilities in the area to ensure the future health of the club.

### Marketing/Promotional

- To ensure a positive awareness in the local community of the clubs activities, through publicity, marketing and good communications.

### Social Aspects

- To develop the social side of the club.
- To create greater harmony and team awareness involving members, parents etc.

### Clubmark

- To achieve Clubmark status.

## **CLUB OBJECTIVES**

### **People**

#### **Athletes Recruitment and Retention**

The club has been very successful in recruiting new members at Senior and Junior level. There has been a particular increase in the number of senior ladies and youngsters from the age of 8.

At the start of our last Development Plan in 2008 membership stood at 350, i.e:200 seniors and 150 juniors. At the end of September 2012 the paid up membership stood at 437 i.e. 243 seniors and 194 juniors a good increase.

Turnover of young athletes is quite high particularly when they reach early to mid. Teens.

We are comfortable with our present membership level in terms of managing our resources. With better facilities we could comfortably increase membership even further.

In all our training locations it is important all new members are made to feel welcome. This needs to continue throughout an athletes stay with us.

*Objective is to increase paid up membership to 525 over 5 years.*

For seniors this will be achieved by:

- 1) Continuing good promotional and communication levels locally.
- 2) Welcoming people new to running and converting some of these beginners to full club membership. We currently have two qualified coaches running New Improvers run groups as part of the Run England Initiative.

For young athletes we will continue to coordinate and maintain active recruitment and retention programme within schools. We will also support the local schools cross country races.

## Coaching

Our aim is to provide a 1:12 coaching ratio and we continue to encourage existing runners/helpers and parents to assist.

We have 19 coaches including:

Level 1	6
Level2	4
Level 3	3
Level 4	1

All cost for coaching will be met by the club

*Objective is to recruit two level 1 coaches per annum and support two existing coaches to reach level 2 each year. Encourage all coaches to attend first aid, equity in sport and child protection courses*

## Officials

We have 10 officials, mostly track and field

*Objective is to increase this number by a minimum of 1 per annum and to co-opt an Officials secretary.*

## Volunteers

We have been successful in recruiting volunteers and present number total 35. We now have Team Managers at all levels.

Parent volunteers organise six town centre 'grand prix' races involving up to 100 runners at each race.

Four of our major events; Pednor 5, Herberts' Hole 10k., The Junior Triathlon and Shardeloes 10k each require up to 40 Helpers.

*Objective To continue good relations/communications with existing volunteers and identifying newcomers. Target is to increase number of volunteers by 5 per annum.*

## Activities

### Training and Competition

We have been very successful in competitions winning many county titles and our Young Athletes in particular achieving fantastic results in Area and National events. Much of this success is because of quality and highly motivated coaching and parental support.

Our Young Athletes, without a local track, were promoted in 2012 to the McCain National Young Athletes League Premier Division. They also won 5 out of the 6 youngest team categories in the prestigious Chiltern Cross Country League in the 2011/2012 season.

Our aim is to help every athlete reach their potential. We have some 20 athletes who represent their county.

Inevitably due to our lack of facilities and the high cost of local housing some of our best athletes will migrate to other parts of the country.

*Objective is to continue providing the best coaching support and to increase athletes of county standard by 10% pa. over the next 5 years.*

## Social

We should create a sense of belonging and identity for all members of the club in a sport which is not generally team based.

Without a club meeting place it is even more important that the Chairman and others communicate regularly with athletes/parents etc. to build cohesion and teamwork.

Our aim is to hold more organised social events and a presentation evening.

In the meantime there are many small social gatherings including twice monthly social runs for the seniors in the beautiful Chiltern countryside, coach trips to the Thames and Grand Union canal each year followed by a run and involving 50+ people each time. Each year a coach is arranged for runners and supporters to travel to the London Marathon.

In the festive season the seniors enjoy a Christmas meal, a Boxing Day run and a New Years Day run.

The Young Athletes enjoy an annual 'Bran Tub Relay' and the whole ethos of their training sessions, including the 6 Grand Prix races is intended to be fun as well as training.

*Objective is to organise more "All Club" events so that all athletes including parents of young athletes feel part of the club.  
A small working party will be co-opted.*

## Welfare and Equity

The club has an excellent record and is fully aware of the need for fairness and equality of access.

Parents are encouraged to assist the club with coaching and volunteer duties and helping with transportation needs.

### *Objectives*

- A) Provide a welcome pack for new athletes and parents so that everyone is aware of our expectations and requirements and various codes of conduct.  
Existing members will receive the same information via our website
- B) Provide first aid training so that all age groups are covered in all the locations we use. This includes improving medical access at our races in exposed locations.
- C) Ensure codes of conduct are maintained and implemented.

All these objectives will be managed and monitored by our Management Committee.

## Partners

### School Links

The club has successful contacts with the following schools:

- Dr.Challoners Grammar School (endurance-winter)(athletics-summer)
- Challoners High School(endurance-winter) SAQ and sprint groups-summer)
- Elangeni (Running Club-all year).
- St.Marys Gerrards Cross(athletics-summer)
- The Beacon(athletics-summer)
- Beaconsfield High School
- Little Kingshill Combined

We aim to increase the number of contacts and will be actively talking to

The Amersham School, The Misbourne and Chalfont Community College.

We also have links with several schools through the Chesham and District Primary Schools Cross Country Assoc. who we support and have recruited several good endurance runners as a result.

We will engage with primary and secondary schools on a regular basis to assist athlete development and provide coaching input into schools.

We will also encourage teachers to attend club coaching sessions to help develop the teachers coaching skills.

### *Objectives*

- A) To add another 2 school partnerships during the term of this plan
- B) To provide a community athletics coach in local schools
- C) Support local cross country races organised by Chesham Schools.

## Other Community Groups

Ensure that local politicians and others are aware of clubs status and needs and in particular seek their help in identifying and providing improved facilities.

### *Objective*

Continue to invite Chairman of CDC and mayors of Amersham and Chesham to attend our local races and present prizes.

## Management/Administration

The club is run by a dedicated and professional management committee (11 people) who all have a great interest in athletics. They are supported by other officials and team managers and we also co-opt other helpers and set up working parties when required. All are volunteers.

The management committee meet every 6 weeks but any urgent decisions can be dealt with between meetings. This 5 year plan will be managed by the same team who will agree action plans and the overall plan reviewed every 6 months.

The management committee will work with England Athletics, Bucks Athletic Assoc, Bucks Sports, Chiltern District Council and others to optimize the availability of resources and the enjoyment our sport can provide

The present management committee is very robust but plans need to be in place to ensure we continue to identify future likely committee members (we already ask for employment details on membership application forms).

Our Chairman should be allowed to stand aside within 3 years and others may also wish to accept different challenges.

The Management team are completing the Clubmark application to ensure this is in place late 2012/early2013.

### *Objective*

- A) Create a strategy for succession planning for all management roles.
- B) Achieve Clubmark status.

## Facilities

This is our 'Achilles heel'. There are no athletic facilities in Chiltern District. There seems to be no ambition nationally or locally or at schools level to improve the situation. Other sports including football, rugby, hockey and cricket are well served.

We meet in the following locations:

### Seniors

- Rickmansworth Road Car Park Amersham
- Hervines Park.Amersham
- Chesham Moor Gym and Swim Chesham

### Youth Athletes

- Council Offices , Amersham
- Amersham and Chiltern Rugby Club, Amersham
- Chesham Grammar School, Chesham
- Hervines Park, Amersham
- Lowndes Park, Chesham
- Dr.Challoners Grammar School, Amersham
- Pavilion, Hervines Park, Amersham
- Watford Track
- St.Michael's School, Watford
- Hillingdon Athletic Centre
- Guide Hut, Lowndes Park, Chesham
- Rickmansworth Road Car Park, Amersham

Multiple sites add greatly to the administrative effort needed in coordinating training sessions, ensuring sufficient coaching cover on site and the inconvenience to parents with siblings often training in different locations. The problem is particularly bad in the winter months when lighting, changing facilities and shelter is important.

We will continue to search every avenue and hope that at a stage in the future we can identify a partner willing to join us. In particular we will remain in regular contact with:

- The Chairman Chiltern District Council.
- Charles Owen-Conway, Chairman Amersham and Chiltern Rugby Club.
- Ian Rogers, Chairman Amersham Cricket Club.
- Cliff Davies, President Chesham Rugby Club.
- Jonathon Royals, Chairman Chesham Cricket Club.
- Brian McCarthy, Chairman Chesham United F.C.
- Lawrence Lipka, Chairman Amersham Town F.C.

We will also be in contact with heads of the following Secondary Schools:

- Dr.Challoners Grammar School,
- Dr.Challoners High School,
- Chesham Grammar School
- Chiltern Hills Academy
- Amersham School
- In addition one Primary School, i.e., the Beacon in Chesham Bois.

All these schools continually review their sporting facilities.

We also need to be aware of all developments and constructions taking place, including 'brown field' sites because there may be a trade off between developing a site and providing sporting facilities/community needs etc. This includes HS2.

#### *Objective*

To have solved this problem within the period of this plan.

## Marketing and Sponsorship

We aim to communicate effectively with the clubs athletes, parents, officials, coaches etc. and relevant agencies as well as the general public by:

- Continuing to maintain our excellent website thus ensuring all club members are aware of issues affecting them including race information, training sessions, club contact points and news items.
- Non members can also easily access the same information when deciding whether to join us.
- Juniors in addition receive letters and information as appropriate.
- Promoting the AGM and issuing the Chairman's annual report
- Detailed articles appear in the local press (Bucks Examiner Group) on average three times monthly and in other local journals including 'Your Chesham' and 'Chiltern Voice'.
- Notice boards are used at our training venues for seniors and juniors with a weekly input to the seniors from our chairman.
- Exploring the use of social media sites such as Facebook.
- Increasing usage of internal e mails.

We have limited sponsorship from Fox's, Gil-Lec and Ink Link. They provide funds to support our three main races. All these sponsors have strong ties with the club.

We do need to find additional sponsors in order to improve further the level of income achieved from our races which in turn provide the funds to purchase capital items.

*Objective is to increase sponsorship income which is presently £1150 pa. to £2000 pa...We will find a member who has the skills to undertake this task.*

## Finance

Club finances are well managed and healthy.

The strategy is that subscriptions should cover the cost of the day to day expenses of the club (the major expense is facility hire).

The club organise races and the income is used to add to our reserves as well as paying for exceptional capital items. The plan is to add minimum £2000 pa. to our reserves so that any future major funding need will be less onerous.

Subscription income is roughly £11000 pa. (£10900 in 2010 and £10700 in 2011). All active members pay £30pa. with family membership at £75.

Subscriptions will rise in line with increasing costs and will be affected by future increases in England Athletics affiliation fees.

### **Race income**

The club organises 4 open events namely; Pednor 5, Junior Triathlon, Shardeloes 10k. And Herbert's Hole 10k.

#### **Pednor 5**

This is a low-key event in view of restricted access and safety. With a beautiful course, we need to protect this event which has slowly increased competition numbers with average 180 finishers over last 5 years. We have a limit of 220 entrants on this race and look to achieve this number by 2017.

#### **Junior Triathlon**

We attracted 157 youngsters in 2006 for this taster event for 8-15 year olds. We were looking principally to attract children who have not previously undertaken a triathlon, or indeed any of the individual disciplines.

In 2012 we had 200 youngsters and that is the limit we will set for future events.

Other junior triathlons have folded but we will continue with this event with a low entry fee and plan to be cost neutral. Major cost is the hire of local pool. By continuing we are filling a need for youngsters locally to experience competitive sport.

#### **Shardeloes 10k**

This was originally a 5 mile road race and has been rebranded as multi-terrain.

Finishers over last 5 years have averaged 207. In 2012 numbers improved at 220 and the aim is to gradually increase this number to 300 over 5 years.

## Herbert's Hole 10k

In its 20<sup>th</sup> year, has been a very successful and popular race.

Finishers have averaged 335 over last 5 years. Course limit is about 400 so only usual marketing and promotional effort needed to maintain numbers or increase. We will look to hit 400 within period of this plan.

We also help with officials and marshals at the Pednor 10 mile race which is organised by members of Chiltern Tri club.

All profits are donated to charity.

### *Objectives*

1. To increase net income from races we organise from £2389 in 2010 and £2788 in 2011 to £3500 by 2017.  
This can be achieved by increasing number of entrants to most of our events but Shardeloes 10 k. In particular and also saving costs on mail outs etc. by more effective use of technology.
2. To manage our finances in such a way that we achieve a surplus year on year in excess of £2000 annually and review subscriptions to ensure they cover normal club expenditure.