Birmingham & District Invitation Cross-Country League
1926 – 2026

Minutes of the 101th AGM held at Halesowen Athletic & Cycling Club 29th May 2026 at 7.00pm

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the 101th AGM and thanked Halesowen C&AC for hosting the meeting.

Obituary
Before the start of the meeting, the members were asked to have a minute's silence in respect of Terry Haines Severn AC (President 2012/13)

Apologies for Absence These were received from Bill & Kay Adcocks (Past Presidents), Terry Alcock (Solihull & Small Heath AC), Vince Carroll (Rugby & Northampton) Neil Cressy (Kenilworth), Peter Lisseman (Past President), Paul Sanderson (Telford AC), Kevin Hendricken (City of Stoke AC) Mary Hodges (Midland Women's XC League) Paul Smith (Nuneaton AC) Craig Hinks (Sparkhill Harriers) Andy Prophett (Weston Tempo) John Vickers (Official) Peter Ball (Broms & Redditch) Glen Lock (Race Referee Wolves & Bilston)

Present at the meeting
Rob Mulgrue (DASH, Past President, Official), Michael Morley, Toby Dury (Aldridge), Steve Howes (Solihull), Sally-Anne & Wayne Tully (Sphinx AC), David Norman Noel Mckakly (Wolves & Bilston), Graham Heeley, (Past President), Darren Riley (Sparkhill), Martin Ludford Treasurer (BRAT), Keith Burgess (Birchfield), Gavin Harrison, Chris Roberts James Nash (Syned Striders), Edward Brown, Sam Stapley (Uni of B'ham), Andrew Kaighan (Cheltenham & Co Harriers), Joel Freeman, Race Secretary (CLC Striders), Peter Thomas (Centurion RC), Paul Evans (Black Pear Joggers), Mark Hadley, Peter Dear (Halesowen) Phil Pollock, David Sutton, (RSCAC), Len Quartly, Rita Brownlie (Broms & Redditch MWCCL), Terry Alcock Past President, Rebecca Freeman (Solihull & Small Heath AC, MWCCL), Laura & Chris Davis, Karl Moore (West Bromwich Harriers), Ian Clarke Race Secretary (Cobra),Tim Crtichlow (Sedgley Striders) Rich Skyes (Spa Striders) D. Hands, Paul O'Brien (Telford AC), Mathew Gilveur, Kit Monti, Dominic Quinn (Warwick Uni), Geoff Fullwood (DASH), Bryan Mills (Webmaster, Tipton), Chris Hitchman Official, Noel Butler (Chair, Leamington) Carolyn Franks (Hon Sec, Past President, Cheltenham & County Harriers).
Observers from Wolves TRX: Adam Guy & Ben Foster

Minutes of the 100th A.G.M.
The minutes were accepted as a true record.

Matters Arising from the Minutes of the AGM & the Executive Minutes.
There were no matters arising.

Chairperson's Report
The league's centenary season had much that was not planned as well as a great centenary race.
Before the season started, the league discovered that it had made a big error in awarding Telford AC the team gold medals in division three. Because they had failed to finish a team in three of the four fixtures the previous season, they were not eligible for team trophies or promotion in 2024-25.

This was the league's mistake and as Chair I took full responsibility for it. I take this opportunity to apologise once again to Telford and the other three teams involved Bournville Harriers, Kenilworth Runners and Northbrook AC.

The season started on a positive note with a joint race at Newbold Comyn in Leamington with all three divisions running together to celebrate the league's centenary. It was a wonderful celebration of cross country running over an excellent course and we had over 800 finishers. We were joined by the Midland Women's Cross Country league whose two divisions ran together and had over 500 finishers.

Our President Carolyn Franks addressed the athletes at the start of the race and pointed out that West Bromwich Harriers were the only founder member of the league still competing in the league. Since then, it has been pointed out that a number of founder members are still competing in the league as part of a merged club. It was ironic then that the race to celebrate our centenary was won by Jacob Cann, an athlete from our newest club Weston Tempo. Finally, we had a distinguished guest in Ian Stewart who had competed in the league and is the only male Briton to have won the World Cross Country Title. It was a truly memorable day.

In December I went to Betley to officiate at the division 1 fixture which went off very well. It was a true cross-country course with sheep on the course to add authenticity.

In January we had the unprecedented situation where all three fixtures were postponed due to the bad weather.

In February, I refereed the division 3 fixture at Coombe Abbey Park which was the first time the league had a race that had a scheduled morning start. Despite heavy rain in the week prior to the race, it went off very well. Again, there were sheep on the course so it appears they were following me around!

Subsequently, a number of clubs asked if the league were planning more morning starts as their athletes had liked it. West Bromwich Harriers have submitted a proposal to change our rules to allow morning starts and this will be considered at the AGM.

I want to thank all the host clubs who contribute so much to the league by putting on races but in particular I would mention Spa Striders, Telford AC and Black Pear Joggers for their efforts to rearrange the cancelled fixtures.

The league would not run smoothly without the work done by the divisional secretaries so thanks to Bryan Mills (Division 1). Joel Freeland (Division 2) and Ian Clarke (Division 3). There is a change this year because Joel's club CLC Striders were promoted to division 1 and Bryan Mills has generously suggested that he move to look after division 2 so that Joel can be with his club.

We could not put on our fixtures without the splendid officials who come out in all conditions to ensure the races are safe and properly organised and I include in this the club volunteers you are invaluable in completing the officials teams at fixtures. So a big thank you to you all.

Again, the officials for all the fixtures were appointed by the Joint Sub-committee with the Women's league and I would like express my thanks to Steve Webb for his work on this sub-committee and Mary Hodges who was the Women's league representative. I am not sure clubs realise just how much work goes into getting the officials in places for the fixtures.

Our finances were in good hands again last season so my thanks go to our Treasurer Martin Ludford for all his hard work looking after the accounts. It's at this point I must record our thanks to Coventry Runner Sports Shop for once again sponsoring the athletes numbers for all three divisions.

The accounts that will be presented to the AGM will not have been audited because we were unable to find anyone who would volunteer for the role. A request for a volunteer was sent to all club contacts and every athlete who registered directly with the league but we got three expressions of interest but could not fill the role. I find it disappointing that with over 1,000 people connected with the league there is not one person willing to volunteer to do this important role. This will be discussed at the AGM and it may be that we will have to employ a professional to conduct the audit which in turn will increase the clubs' affiliation fee.

Finally, I must thank our Secretary Carolyn Franks who was also our President for the centenary season for all the work she does to ensure the league runs smoothly.

It is with regret that I record that Dudley & Stourport who failed to close a team in one of the fixtures last season and so had to reapply for membership has decided not to do so and will not compete next season. This is very disappointing, not only losing a well-established club but D&S incorporates one of our founder clubs Dudley Harriers. I trust their absence will be short and hope to see them back in the league in the near future.
The good news is that two clubs have applied to join the league namely Wolves TRX and Evesham Vale Running Club. Their applications will be considered at the AGM.
At the AGM there will be motions to introduce morning races and change the rules that apply when clubs fail to close a team. Please ensure you are represented at the AGM to vote on these and other important issues.
To have a successful league we need to have 12 clubs who are prepared to host fixtures. So, I appeal to those who haven't hosted before to consider whether they can. There is plenty of expertise available to assist clubs to set out a course and with the planning of a fixture so you will have plenty of support.

Noel Butler Chair

President's Address

It has been an honour to be President for the 2nd time in the 100th year of the League interestingly a S.A. Wright of West Bromwich Harriers was President from 1950 to 52 & again in 1975/76. I thoroughly enjoyed the start of the year with all Divisions thanks to all the hard work done by Noel Butler. It brought back memories of Senneleys Park when we started the season as part of the Cross Challenge. I was extremely saddened to have to cancel the January fixtures. Everything possible was tried by the host clubs & even after the day trying to re-arrange, but in the end it as the lack of qualified officials available that meant we had no option, but to abandon them. The first time in the history of the League (apart from the war years). Ironically, in Cheltenham it was a beautiful day, but we had hosted in December where I love supporting as you can see most of the race. For the final race of the season was hosted by Bromsgrove & Redditch AC on a very wet Ipsley Common to see Division One with the University of Birmingham dominating the League.
My sincere thanks to all clubs who hosted (or tried to host), to the coaches who encourage you & finally the officials (No officials mean no race!). It is interesting to see that there was over the season 1,500 athletes competing that the league has served. A league we can be proud of.

Carolyn Franks President

Statement of Accounts

(See next page)

BIRMINGHAM & DISTRICT INVITATION CROSS COUNTRY LEAGUE
INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT
1.4.2025 - 31.3.2026 and comparison to previous year

Subject to Audit	2025-26 Current Year	2024-25 Previous Year
Income		
Affiliations	£9,481.25	£9,100.00
Midland Womens XC League recharge	£3,506.32	£3,751.56
Donation / sponsorship for race numbers	£420.30	£410.29
Lost numbers	£42.00	£0.00
Extra plaques / Medals	£0.00	£510.00
Other Income	£0.20	£0.00
Total Income	**£13,450.07**	**£13,771.85**
Expenditure		
Hosting costs	£11,522.15	£10,803.33
Plaques / Medals	£689.40	£1,074.00
Travelling expenses	£1,009.24	£1,416.45
Out of pocket expenses	£82.06	£50.63
Race numbers	£420.30	£484.14
Donations	£110.00	£0.00
Affiliation to EA	£205.00	£200.00
Room hire	£25.00	£0.00
Other	£0.00	£0.00
Total Expenditure	**£14,063.15**	**£14,028.55**
Net Surplus / - Deficit	**-£613.08**	**-£256.70**
Interest received on Santander a/c	**£162.91**	**£102.17**
Total Surplus / - Deficit	**-£450.17**	**-£154.53**

BALANCE SHEET as at 31st March	2026	2025
NatWest current a/c	738.35	1,472.35
Santander deposit a/c	11,927.81	10,764.90
Debtors - Midland Women's League	3,506.32	3,751.56
Debtors - Clubs re additional Medals	0.00	510.00
	16,172.48	16,498.81
Less Creditors	-145.84	0.00
Total Net Assets	**£16,026.64**	**£16,498.81**
Represented by		
Accumulated surplus b/f	16,498.81	16,653.34
Surplus / (Deficit) for year	-450.17	-154.53
	£16,048.64	**£16,498.81**

CASH MOVEMENTS during year	2025-26	2024-25
Current a/c opening balance	1,472.35	1,883.24
Receipts during year incl tfrs	22,763.01	13,374.52
Payments during year incl tfrs	-23,497.01	-13,785.41
Closing account balance	**£738.35**	**£1,472.35**
Deposit a/c opening balance	10,764.90	10,662.73
Receipts in year (interest)	162.91	102.17
Transfers in	10,000.00	0.00
Transfers out	-9,000.00	0.00
Closing account balance	**£11,927.81**	**£10,764.90**

Treasurer's Report for 2025 / 26

Due to there only being three races there was a deficit of £3k. The chip timing cost £1.800 which included for the Women. We have reserves of £16k. Paul O'Brien (Telford AC) asked how much the Women had been charged. It was explained that we do it on a percentage of their athletes competing. Regretfully, the accounts have not been examined. NB had sent out emails to all athletes & only had 4 replies of interest. It was felt there must be an accountant in the clubs of the League. ML pointed out that the turn over for the year was about £13k with 61 transactions, 12 dealing with the interest & 40 payments out. If no one comes forward the League will have no option but to hire an accountant. NB informed the meeting he would send out a note again to see if we can get an offer & will draw up a Job Description. **ACTION**: NB to email all members of the League & draw up a Job Description.

Martin Ludford, Hon. Treasurer

Affilation Fees for 2026/27

ML recommended the fees stay the same for the coming year - £185. This was accepted by the meeting.

Constitution

a) 1. Minimum Age to Compete in the League: UKA Rules on age groups and the definition of the competition year are changing and this will affect the League's minimum age rule (A7.6). This currently states: "Athletes must have reached the age of 17 years by 31st August at the commencement of the cross-country season." The new definition of the competition year is from 1st September to 31st August for both endurance events (i.e. including cross-country) and track & field and the qualification for an age group is an athlete's age at the end of the that competition year, i.e. 31st August. For example, an athlete who is aged 18 on 31st August 2027 will be regarded under the new UKA Rules as being eligible to compete as an under 20 during the 2026/27 cross-country season.

Therefore, to reflect these changes it is proposed to amend Rule A7.6 to state that the minimum age must be 18 as at 31st August of the competition year. This was Passed.

2.Cancellation of Races: The existing Rule C16 gives the procedure for host clubs who find it necessary to cancel a fixture. However, no procedure is stated for how to decide whether, when and where to re-arrange it. Such situations will be rare and the circumstances different so any new rule should be sufficiently flexible to give the League discretion to cope with these. The most appropriate body to take such decisions is the Executive Committee, which has representatives from each Division and League Officers, and, after consulting the affected clubs, can decide quickly via Zoom or e-mail consultation. It is proposed that the existing Rule becomes 16.1 and a new 16.2 be added as follows: "The Executive Committee, after consulting affected clubs, shall have power to decide whether and how the fixture is to be re-arranged and any effect on the award of team and individual points." The Terms of Reference of the Executive Committee (A9.1) will also need to be amended to reflect this power. This was Passed.

3. In addition to the above there are a number of small technical changes needed in order to reflect the way the League now operates:

3.1 The League no longer appoints a Referee for each Division for the whole season. Instead, the Joint Committee with the Midlands Women's Cross-Country League appoints Referees for each fixture. Therefore, the word "Divisional" should be deleted from Rules A9g and A15. This was passed

3.2 There is a discrepancy in the wording of Rule A18 (Financial Management & Accounts). In A18.4 it states that an independent auditor shall be appointed. In practice the auditor is from one of the League clubs. To define what is meant by independence, it is proposed that in A18.4 the following be added: "… who is not a member of the Executive Committee nor of the same club as the Treasurer." Furthermore, the word "Auditor" implies that the process is akin to a professional audit and thus requires someone with the requisite professional qualifications. The actual process is an examination of the accounts and does not follow all the processes of a formal audit. The use of the word "Auditor" might discourage someone from a club putting themselves forward for this role. Therefore, it is proposed to substitute "Examiner" for "Auditor" throughout Rule A18 and to amend the wording in Rule A18.3 to insert "independently examined" in place of "audited". This was passed.

3.3 Rule B2 states that each race "shall be approximately 10,000m in distance." The UKA Rules state that the maximum distance for under 20s is 10,000m. It is recommended that the league Rule be amended to conform to the UKA Rule This was passed

3.4 Rule B2.5 states that "Applications to host races must be made in writing to the Secretary at least 6 weeks prior to the AGM." This should be amended to read "Offers" to hold …This was passed

3.5 Rule B7.2 states that trophies should be returned by the final fixture. To give some leeway if a club does not return a trophy by that time, this should be amended to "by the third race of the following season" This was agreed. It was also pointed out to ask clubs if any have the trophies for Division Two or Three to return them.

3.6 Rule C4.2 deals with the deadline for declarations and states that these must be made to the Divisional Secretary by midnight on the Wednesday preceding the race. However, in practice some Divisional Secretaries have agreed that this can be extended to the Friday. The Rule should be amended to simply give Divisional Secretaries discretion to set their own deadline? This was passed.

b) Change proposed to rule B2.3 by West Bromwich Harriers and seconded by City of Birmingham Striders to add after the 5th word '11,00 am or ' so the rule would read - **All races shall start at 11.00am or 2.30pm unless circumstances decree otherwise**
A discussion was had with Warwick Uni saying it would be difficult when they travel on local buses; some folks work Saturday morning; other pointed out the a lot of major competitions start early; others felt they could get more athletes out; it would help in getting the course down in daylight; CH suggested we should be flexible; TA wondered what effect it would have on the host club; IC suggest it should be held between 11.00am & 2.30pm RM informed the meeting we would have to put in a new rule change; NB suggested it was up to the host club to decide what start time they could do. A vote was taken ; 3 Against the rest of the meeting were in favour.

c) Change proposed by Telford AC is to remove Rule C8.2 in its entirety and amend Rules C8.4 & C8.5. This rule reads "Such a club will also be ineligible for any award or promotion from the lower Division for one season". It would also remove this penalty in rules C8.4 & C8.5 Seconded by South Birmingham Striders. NB informed the meeting that Executive did

not back this proposal. GH pointed out how in the past we have had clubs playing the system. CH pointed out this had happened to Leamington this year & they did not want the penalty. AK felt for Telford AC & the challenges caused by ParkRun. A vote was taken with 3 For & 22 Against.

d) Change proposed by Sneyd Striders "A club must offer to host an event every 3/4 years. It could be done jointly with another club." G Harrison explained that not everyone is offering & for small clubs this is a lot to do. Warwick Uni said they would be happy to help & in favour of everyone doing a bit. TA suggested we change it from 'must' to 'is expected'. A vote was taken & there were 3 in favour 22 Against.

Applications to join the League: Evesham Vale had applied but withdrew this week. TRX Wolves AC had applied & Adam Guy spoke on their behalf explaining they have at least 24 runners involved in the Midlands / Nationals this last year. They are training officials, have 3 venues they could use with landowners' agreement; they have an experienced Race Director. G. Heeley asked if this was a breakaway club from Wolverhampton & Bilston. The meeting was told they have young & old from a variety of clubs & athletes who started with a running group & now know about the Birmingham XC League. ML asked how long they had been established. They set up in February 2026 & now have over a hundred members. They are building a women's section too. It was pointed out to them they must be First Claim to run in our League.
It was agreed unanimously that they be accepted into the League.

Make-up of the League for the 2026-2027 Season.

DIVISION ONE	DIVISION TWO	DIVISION THREE
Birchfield Harriers	Aldridge RC	Amazing Feet
BRAT	Bournville Harriers	Centurion RR
Black Pear Joggers	Cannock & Staffs AC	City Of Birmingham Striders
Bromsgrove & Redditch AC	Halesowen ACC	Cobra R & Tri
Cheltenham & County Harriers	Kenilworth Runners	Coventry Tri
City of Stoke AC	Knowle & Dorridge RC	Dudley Kingswinford RFC
CLC Striders	Leamington C& AC	Gloucester AC
Coventry Godiva Harriers	Loughborough Students	Kidderminster & Stourport AC
Royal Sutton Coldfield AC	Nuneaton Harriers	Kings Heath RC
Rugby & Northampton AC	Severn AC	Massey Ferguson
Tipton Harriers	Spa Striders	Newcastle Staffs
University Of Birmingham	Stratford Upon Avon AC	Northbrook AC
University Of Warwick	Tamworth AC	Sedgley Striders
Weston Tempo	Telford AC	Sneyd Striders
Wolverhampton & Bilston AC		Solihll & Smallheath AC
Worcester AC		South Birmingham Striders
		Sparkhill Harriers
		Sphinx AC
		Stourbridge RC
		TRX Wolves AC
		West Bromwich Harriers

Dates for the 2026-27 season:

14TH November 2026, 5th December 2026, 16th January 2027 & 13th February 2027

Dates & Venues for the 2026/27 season.

	Div One	Div Two	Div Three
14th November '26	Rugby & Northampton + W	Spa Striders +W2	
5th December '26	Cheltenham + WD1		
16th January '27	Black Pear Joggers Women Div 2	Telford AC	
13th February '27	Stoke AC +WD2		Sphinx AC /Northbrook 11.00am + WD2 10.00am

Division Two Kenilworth are willing to help a club.
The Women's League to decide at their AGM, which venues they would choose to go to.

Election of Officers

President: ML informed the meeting of Noel's background making him a worthy President.
He moved to the Midlands in 1996 and joined Leamington C&AC.

First race on 2nd Nov 1996 in division 2 at Northampton (The league had 5 divisions then)

Last Race, 21 years later on 7th Feb 2015 also in div 2 at Blackbridge,

Has been race director / clerk of course for many league fixtures at Newbold Comyn in Leamington including a number of joint races where all the divisions run together including the centenary race.

Had a spell as Leamington's team manager

Has been officiating in the league since he stopped running

Finally, has been the chair of the league since 2019 (7 seasons)

NB was elected President

NB suggested the following were accepted en bloc. The meeting agreed to this proposal.
LQ thanked the meeting for being made President Elect & it as an honour for Bromsgrove & Redditch AC.

- Immediate Past President: Carolyn Franks (Cheltenham & County Harriers)
- President Elect: Len Qartley (Bromsgrove & Redditch AC)
- Chairman: Noel Butler (Leamington C&AC)
- Secretary: Carolyn Franks (Cheltenham & County Harriers)
- Treasurer: Martin Ludford (BRAT)
- MCAA Rep Graham Heeley (Sparkhill Harriers)
- Auditor: Vacant
- Webmaster Bryan Mills (Tipton Harriers)

- Officials Co-ordinator Steve Webb (Solihull & Small Heath)
- Constitution (Co-opted) Rob Mulgrue (Dudley & Stourbridge AC)
- Race Secretaries Division One: Joel Freeland (CLC Striders)
  Division Two: Bryan Mills (Tipton)
  Division Three: Ian Clarke (Cobra)

The following referees were co-opted onto the Executive; Noel Mckakly (Wolverhampton & Bilston), Chris Hitchman (Leamington C & AC) & Glen Lock (Wolverhampton & Bilston).

The meeting confirmed Graham Heeley as a Vice Life President in recognition for all the years running in the League and continuing with administration.

League Website

Bryan Mills was thanked for his work on the website.

Any Other Business: IC suggested we get trophies for Division Two & Three. It was also thought there should be an amnesty to see if the old trophies could be found. CF has a trophy at home

Date and Venue of the 101th AGM

The date for the 102nd AGM will be Friday 28th May 2027 at Halesowen AC & C .

With no further business the meeting closed at 8.48pm.

Signed _____

Date _____