

# CHAIRMAN'S AGM REPORT

2024/2025

## Headlines and Challenges

BMHAC has made significant progress in competition at most levels, **opening the Clubhouse, governance, coaching pathways, PR and social media, health and safety and organising more open competitions.**

There is much more to do to make certain that the Club is able to face the challenge of competition for members from other sports, clubs and activities to ensure that BMHAC will continue to build its increasing profile at national and regional levels.

Ensuring that we have **the personnel to reduce the current average age of people** serving the Club as Committee members, coaches, officials and other volunteers is vital. Specifically we need to significantly increase the number of coaches to build some flexibility into our coaching teams and thus to reduce the overuse of individuals.

If we don't achieve this, we will have **personnel** crises as existing 'old faithfuls' become unavailable. There have been two notable examples with Club stalwarts, Ian Byett and Carol Quinn having to step back through ill health. Others are reducing their commitments, including Ken and Wendy Littlejohns. Others are also actively planning to do so.

## Competition

The headlines are summarised in our AGM video, which will be shown at the AGM. The plan is to publish segments on Instagram through our new Press and Media Team.

Coaches have made concerted efforts to implement **the Club's rule about athletes representing BMHAC in competition.** A recent example was that almost half of the the field at a recent Junior Cross Country League match were from BMHAC. Coaches are able to sign off athletes with conditions that make competition difficult.

With regard to track and field league competitions, we **need to improve our representation across all disciplines;** there are still significant gaps, for example, in jumps, throws and relays in younger age groups and endurance events in the senior leagues.

We need people to step forward as **team managers**, particularly with respect of the **Alder Valley League.** We have reduced the volume of work, as Membership Secretary and coach Jo Breeds will do the data crunching and selection aspects of the role. However, Jo cannot team manage on competition days.

The Club maintained its performances in the National and Southern Athletic Leagues and the Wessex Athletics League. Getting consistent scoring across all disciplines remains a significant challenge.

The **senior road running/cross country group** continues to thrive. We are currently second in the men's division in the Southern Cross Country League. Members of the group combined with their masters track colleagues to **win the men's Hampshire Veterans League title** again and the team went on to **win the Regional Final.** Deborah Montgomery has done a magnificent job in building a ladies team for the Veterans League.

**Thanks are due to all our team managers.** Their work is vital in getting people out on the day.

**Parents** are also vital in ensuring that young athletes arrive in good time...and turn up if they have committed to an event.

## Clubhouse and Other Down Grange Facilities

The past year has seen a major event in the history of BMHAC; the opening – at last – of our new Clubhouse! It's just a building but it gives us the opportunity to work more cohesively as an organisation, offering more services and support to our members. The formal opening of the building was conducted by **His Worship the Mayor, Cllr Dan Putty, who is an old friend of BMHAC.**

**BDBC Sports and Leisure Lead, Cllr Kerry Morrow**, also attended – an important connection, given the Council's proposal to move the **Pitch and Putt course** to Down Grange. The Committee will be resisting this and plans to hold an open meeting with Cllr Morrow to understand the proposal in more depth and to seek assurance that training facilities at Down Grange are not reduced as a result.

**New MP, Luke Murphy**, was present and said he would like to attend one of our home matches.

**BDBC has replaced the throws cage** with a top of the range facility. It has also bought a top specification **pole vault bed and uprights**. Installation of the new base has been delayed and is now planned for April 2025.

Getting to this point has taken a lot of time and energy from the Committee and other members. The new **Refreshments Team** has been offering drinks and refreshments at Club training sessions (and at the Opening). We will now turn our attention to refurbishing the old Club Cabin.

The **Club Cabin was damaged** through flooding. Work to replace the flooring and refurbish the building is now underway.

## Governance

As the Club Secretary's report will show, we have made good progress in ensuring that BMHAC is state of the art in respect of Governance. The Club has achieved all 7 of the EA Club Standards.

## Health and Safety

Neil Barton, our new Health & Safety Coordinator is a safety professional. He has audited all aspects of our operations and has implemented a Health & Safety Framework, which outlines the responsibilities of relevant club members, such as coaches.

## Coaching

We have welcomed **at least eight new people to our coaching teams** this year. **We need more!** All qualification costs are covered by BMHAC.

We are making progress in achieving **smoother pathways for young athletes** and have extended our Club track bookings to enable athletes to access throws training alongside their main event(s).

We **need new coaching assistants** to understudy our experienced athletics coaches. This will help us reduce the huge waiting lists that we have for U11s and also the pressure on existing coaching groups.

Cheryll Ragan has led the **new Sunday morning sessions** for U11s to help reduce the significant waiting list.

## Officials

BMHAC is well known for the **number and competence of its officials** nationally, regionally and locally. However, it is clear that many of the group are getting to the point where they need to reduce or curtail their officiating activities, thus increasing the load on other officials.

In most track leagues clubs are penalised and **lose points** if they do not have the **required number of officials**. This has rarely happened to BMHAC in the past. However, we now need **more help**, even if

it is just the occasional raking of a sandpit. So please offer your help, rather than just spectating, at competitions.

### Press and Media

We are fortunate to have a **new Press and Media Team**. Thanks to Suzanne Allford for her valiant attempts to increase our visibility in the Basingstoke Gazette. Jordanna Morrish took on the challenge of reinvigorating our Instagram account before her retirement. Thanks Jordanna!

Marcia Coleman, Kian Mayoh, Harry Richardson and new member Kallen Quigley have brought new journalistic and social media skills to the task of telling the stories of BMHAC and communicating on a variety of topics with amazing graphics to all members.

We are planning a major upgrade of the **Club's website**.

### The Hampshire Hoppit

The Hoppit continues to thrive under the inspirational leadership of Tim Fowler and his army of supporters. Tim will tell the full story at the AGM.

### Forward Planning

Our sport, other sports and society in general are changing rapidly and we need to ensure that BMHAC is prepared to meet the challenges. The **Committee has completed a review** of our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats and will produce short and longer term plans in due course. We are grateful for help already offered from within the membership.

### Thanks....

.....to **everyone** who has helped BMHAC in the past year, no matter how large or small the contribution in terms of time; it all counts and is really appreciated by the Committee. As we have seen with the Refreshments and Media Teams, sharing roles can reduce the impact on individuals.

Leigh Henderson  
Chair  
BMHAC  
February 2025