



RAC AGM 2021
Monday 28th June 2021



Chair Report

In a year where the news was dominated by and our lives massively impacted by the global pandemic, Rushcliffe AC shone brilliantly as an athletics club owing to a fantastic team of coaches, committee members and volunteers who all rose to the challenge to keep members active. This included 3 fantastic COVID relay legs, putting on carefully managed training sessions in alternative venues (Rushcliffe Country Park and Holme PierrePont) when the track was closed, and virtual club challenges and fun activities which supported emotional as well as physical wellbeing of our members.

Special mention for the COVID relay, kicked off during Lockdown 1 by Graham Moffatt and Steve Dickens, which saw 150 people (predominantly members) take part in relays, defined by birthday date (odds or evens), where they dressed up (optional) and carried a novelty baton of their choice across the distance they could walk or run in 19 mins. So popular was this event, that it ran twice in 2020 and once again in 2021, latterly running for 21 mins against other athletics clubs, as the word spread far and wide of the success of the event and included coverage on England Athletics (EA) website and a very well-deserved EA award.

COVID impacted when, where and how we could train and, as recommended by EA, the club appointed a 'COVID Officer' (Harvey Sugden) to monitor the guidelines, coordinate the return to training and ensure the club were operating within the rules issued by the government and EA. Following a huge team effort by coaches, volunteers and key members of the committee, most notably Nina Coverley and James Scott for setting up and ongoing management of registration for sessions, RAC welcomed athletes back to the track on 1st September 2020. In order to comply with EA guidance, all sessions had to be prebooked so we could keep a record of who had attended and also limit group sizes which were set at a maximum of 12 per coach. Social distancing measures were also put in place, along with robust cleaning and hygiene measures, and full risk assessments and procedures were produced. These guidelines have been in operation whenever the track has been available for training.

Beyond the great achievements highlighted above, which has not only kept our members physically active and our membership strong, I would like to call out the following successes for 2020/2021:

- Mac Blackman won the Pride of Rushcliffe award for his 25 years of training and support of the club – fantastic recognition for outstanding service to the club and the community;
- We gained TrackMark accreditation in December 2020, which confirms safety of the facilities for training purposes and is critical for hosting some events;
- First Aid Training was organised by Pauline Gandee for 12 members of the coaching team and committee. In addition to completing this important training, the club also bought a defibrillator, which is on hand for all training sessions and events;
- The Risk Assessment for training at the club was updated with the support of Kevin Bowen and key members of the committee, and includes some additional measures which protect everyone attending the club and the public when we train on the field adjacent to the track;

- Club membership is strong and we recently held induction sessions (Zoom session for virtual introduction to the club followed by dedicated track sessions) for new members;
- Relationships have been strengthened with Rushcliffe Borough Council, Lex Leisure and Toot Hill School, and we have cleaned up key areas of the track with scrap metal collection and removal of other waste. There's more to go for in the coming year like securing toilets at the track;
- Coach development and recruitment – I'm delighted to confirm Mike Thornewill passed his Athletics Coach Award, and Harvey Sugden and Richard Bradbury completed their Assistant Coach Awards in May 2021. We also had Zoe Ashmore join our coaching team and she is working towards her first qualification;
- Kathryn Mellor stepped into the newly formed Officials Coordinator role and, through her extensive network and knowledge, has had a big impact on supporting events as they ramp up in 2021;
- We have a Development Plan which defines the club's vision and ethos and sets out the 5-year strategy to develop the club in line with these values;
- Volunteer recruitment has been more challenging owing to the track being closed for extended periods of the year and no events running, but we're delighted to have the support of new volunteers who regularly help us on registration;
- Events have made a welcome return in the last month with NOEL, YDL Upper and Lower Age Groups, and Mini League – it is a joy to see so many of our members compete for the club, enjoy these events and build new friendships, and deliver some outstanding performances;
- The club continues to support athletes of all ages and capabilities, and has extended the provision of sessions throughout the week;
- The club is in good financial order.

None of the above would be possible without our phenomenal coaches and committee who work tirelessly behind the scenes to make Rushcliffe AC the club that it is today. There have been many changes to personnel in the last year and I'd like to call out the following:

- Caitlin Sorrell stepped down as Coach Coordinator and was replaced by Pauline Gandee and Suzanne Rathbone;
- Harvey Sugden was appointed as COVID Officer;
- Kathryn Mellor was appointed as Officials Coordinator;
- James Scott will step down as Website Officer at the end of June and be replaced by Rob and Helen Hardisty;
- Nina Coverley will step down as Secretary at the end of June and we await her replacement;
- Kevin Bowen stepped down as Running Coach.

A huge thank you to everyone who has contributed to the club and to the new people who join our community of volunteers. I'm proud to lead Rushcliffe AC and look forward to a second year in this role, cementing what we have already achieved – a thriving athletics club recognised for inclusivity, team spirit, participation and success.

Lorraine Collier