



---

# Saffron Striders Running Club

## Saffron Striders Running Club AGM

Monday 2nd December 2024 at 8pm.

**Kings Arms Public House on 10 Market Hill, Saffron Walden CB10 1HQ**

### Minutes

**Present - 25 members:**

Alistair Cooke	Linda Brett	Marco Arcidiacono	Claire Steel
Iain Rogers	Jake Bonham	Charlotte Diggins	Thomas Roelleke
John James	Lee Gamble	Lyn Hudson	Mark Frow
Neil Halls	Nigel Poad	Kate Wilding	John Heanley
Kerry Harrington	Paula Thurston	David Martin	Margit Wendelberger-James
Angela Marin	Toby Lumsden	Tim McMahon	Mike Bradley
Chris Taylor			

### 1. Apologies of absence:

Ian MacDougall (Treasurer)	Lucie Heanley	Kate Poulter	Alan Taylor
Chloe Brown	Rebecca White	Matt Billis	Yusuf Firat
Anne Dawson	Nigel Coates	Chris Dodge	Rachel Hipperson
Alan Jones			

Alistair opened the AGM promptly at 8 o'clock and thanked everyone for attending. He confirmed that the quorum for the meeting should be a minimum 10% of the total membership currently standing at 161 so 25 attendees was a fantastic turnout and the AGM could proceed.



---

# Saffron Striders Running Club

## 2. Minutes of the 2023 AGM Meeting for approval:

Minutes of the 2023 meeting were reviewed and no comments or updates were made, so they were duly signed off.

## 3. Matter Arising:

There were no matters arising.

## 4. Treasurer report on balance sheet and statement of accounts

Prior to the AGM Ian had circulated to all members of the club via Mailchimp a detailed copy of the Club and Race Accounts (1st December)

Ian was unable to attend but sent his report which Alistair read on this behalf:-

*"The bank balance this year has shown a very small increase of £112 which is good news.*

*This is in spite of a fall in both subscriptions and in sponsorship. We have also doubled the amount we spend on hiring the track from Carver Barracks The fact that we are maintaining our balance in spite of this means that our subscriptions are covering our expenses adequately and hence will not need to be increased in the current year."*

## 5. Committee Members reports:

In opening, Alistair thanked all the committee for their hard work and dedication this year supporting the club and all of it's members.

## Membership Officer

Claire Steele gave her report:

## Saffron Striders RC - AGM – 2 December 2024 Membership Report

### Total Membership and Changes YTD (at 30 November 2024)

- 9% net decrease in members YTD, with total now standing at 167 (183 at 31 December 2023).
- Membership Renewals
  - All members were notified of the need to renew membership at 1 April. Applications were processed and chased at regular intervals, with the process finally completed at 30 June 2024 (this is the cut off to England Athletics' grace period)
  - 64% of members applied to renew their membership.
  - 1 member transferred from First to Second Claim membership as part of the renewal process.
  - 75 members did not renew their membership. Most responded to say they did not intend to renew, but c20 did not respond or did not pay, allowing their membership to lapse.
- Beginners Course
  - 31 individuals joined the 2024 course, including 5 individuals who have attended previous course(s)/ been members before. A decrease on last year's numbers (43)



# Saffron Striders Running Club

- 33 applications were originally received, however 2 did not make payment or start the course.
- 1 applicant notified us they would not continue and 1 has not attended or been responsive to emails – both remain club members as they have paid in full.
- 13 of the 43 that joined the 2023 Beginners course remain with the club today; A 30% retention rate.
- 28 new members were registered during the quarter outside of Beginners course.

Date Joined/ Segment	No. Members
<b>Total 31 Dec 2022</b>	<b>183</b>
Leavers/Lapsed	-75
New Members	+28
New via Beginners	+31
<b>Total 30 Nov 2023</b>	<b>167</b>

Membership Type	No. Members
First Claim	165
Second Claim	2
<b>Total 30 Nov 2023</b>	<b>167</b>

- Trialists
  - 51 trial applications were received this year to date (12 in the last 2 months alone). Of these, 13 have applied for full membership ; a 25% conversion rate.
  - I follow up with trialists to ask for feedback periodically. Where responses are received (response rate is fairly low) the feedback has been positive even if the individual has not decided to join the Club.

## Governance

- 99% membership fees were paid as at 30 November 2023 (2 outstanding – recent applicants)
- Emergency contact details have been shared with the Chairman, Membership and Welfare Officers at regular intervals during the year.

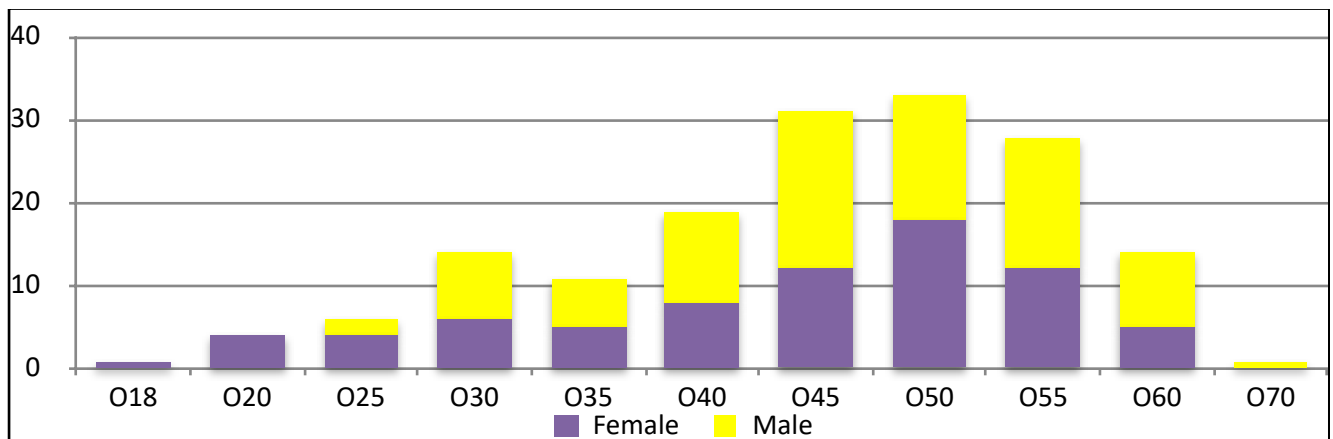
Membership Fee Payment Status	Total
Paid	165 (99%)
Outstanding	2 (1%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>167</b>



# Saffron Striders Running Club

## Trends and Averages

- **Average member age** remains 48, with ages ranging from 18 to 70.
- **M/F split** remains fairly even, taking a slight swing towards the men during the year (54%, up 1% since January)
- The average **length of membership** is 7 Years (Men 8 Years, Ladies 6 Years)
- 35 members have been with the club for 10 years +
- 45% of us have been members for at least 5 years.
- Most new members join in Spring
- Most common birthdays: January
- Most common names: Iain/Ian or David for the men, Kate for the ladies (special mention for Claire in 2nd place!)



Trend Category	Nov-24	Dec-23	Dec-22	Dec-21	Dec-20	Dec-19	Nov-23 Var vs 2023
Total Members	167	183	166	219	201	242	-16
Beginners Course	31	43	21	45	n/a	71	-12
Female	46%	47%	43%	49%	43%	52%	-1%
Male	54%	53%	57%	51%	57%	48%	+1%
Average Age (Years)	48	48	48	46	No data	No data	-

Claire Steel, November 2024

Chris Taylor asked if we had ever considered doing a Winter recruitment drive as the attraction for the track would be a big draw. Do we do any marketing?



---

# Saffron Striders Running Club

Alistair replies that the track has been a great success and the feedback from our 5k Summer Series event was fantastic and was quoted by other runners as the best they had ever been to. The Committee would re-look at what would be involved at the next meeting and recalls that there would be a lot of work involved and we currently have a vacancy for a Club Development Officer.

The question was also asked about using the track for an under 16 junior section? Alistair confirms that C+C run a Junior Athletics meet on a Wednesday at the track (and WaldenTri Juniors offer Running on a Monday) but we can discuss again at the next committee meeting but ultimately would require someone with the necessary dedication, free time and passion to drive our Junior section of the club.

## **Coaching Officer**

In the absence of a Coaching Officer this year Linda Brett gave a brief report of the Beginners Course 2024.

### *Beginners Course Report 2024*

*The year started without a Coaching Officer so I agreed to rally round and get the Beginners Course up and running with any offers of help gratefully received.*

*The Beginners course started as always just after the London Marathon, and with the help from some trusty volunteers we distributed leaflets in Town the week leading up to the course and also put a shout out in the local paper and on Facebook.*

*30+ Beginners started the course with 24 attended week 11 and taking part in our Summer Series 5k race at Carver Barracks, so really pleased with that. They were all given a personalised T Shirt and a set of ICE tags and many have continued running with the Club on a Tuesday and track sessions on a Thursday.*

*We followed Graeme's session plan which as you could expect was meticulously formatted and easy to follow, so credit where credit is due. I opened and closed each session and designated coaches and helpers with tasks each week by a group email. I couldn't have done it without all the coaches and helpers (8min/13max) their support was invaluable.*

*We had some lovely feedback during the course and the coaches@ email was messaged throughout the 11 weeks and Graeme and Marco answered any injury queries. And I'm very pleased to say that Marco has put his name forward to take over as Head Coach ensuring that the Beginners Course Course will continue.*

*Alistair reminds everyone that if anyone is interested in joining the Coaching Team, the club will reimburse 80% of fees.*

## **Communications Officer**

Marco Arcidiacono gave his report:



# Saffron Striders Running Club

## 2024 summary communications report for Saffron Striders RC – AGM

2024 has been another fantastic year with tremendous contribution from the communication team

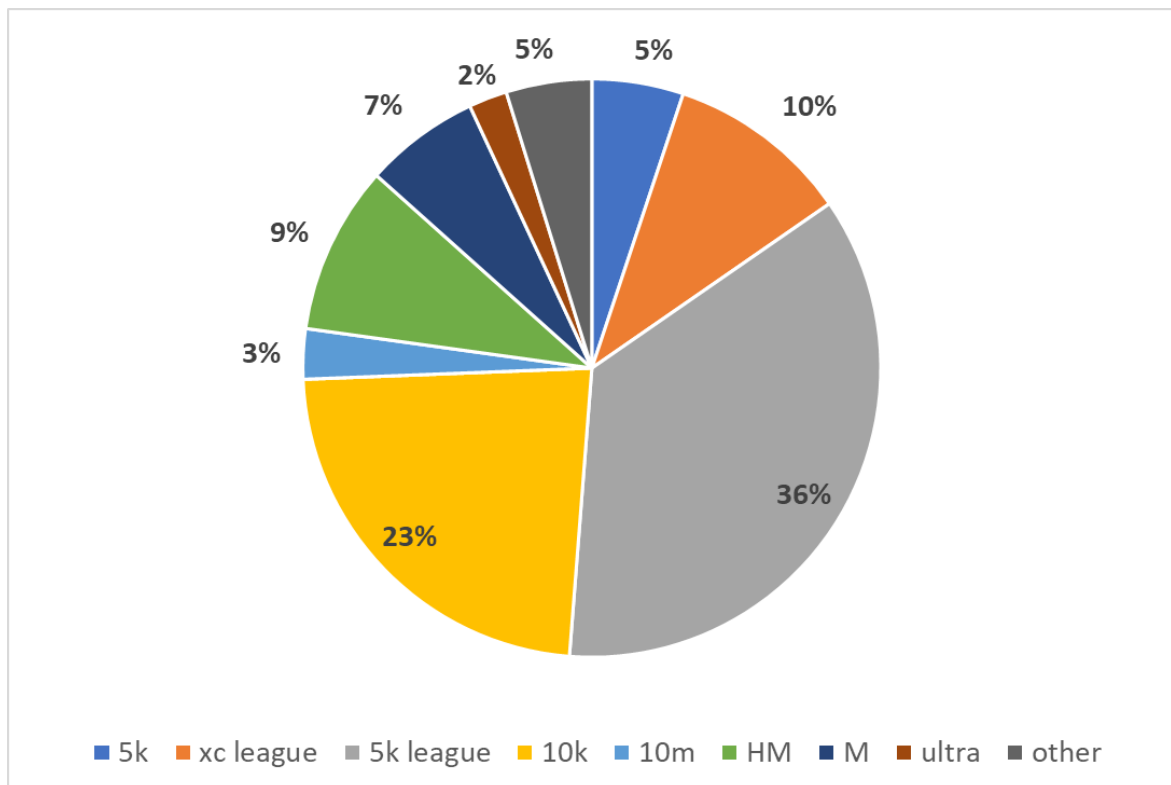
- Mark Fitzhenry → writing the newsletter and feeding news to the local papers.
- Chris Dodge → maintaining club's databases and updating championship tables.
- Tim McMahon → updating the club calendar and the guide runner's rota
- Marco Arcidiacono → updating race results

Detailed analysis of races data is reported below:

In 2024 605 Striders competed in different races, covering in total 7,455km

We are not far from last year's numbers (598 race attendances / 7,920km).

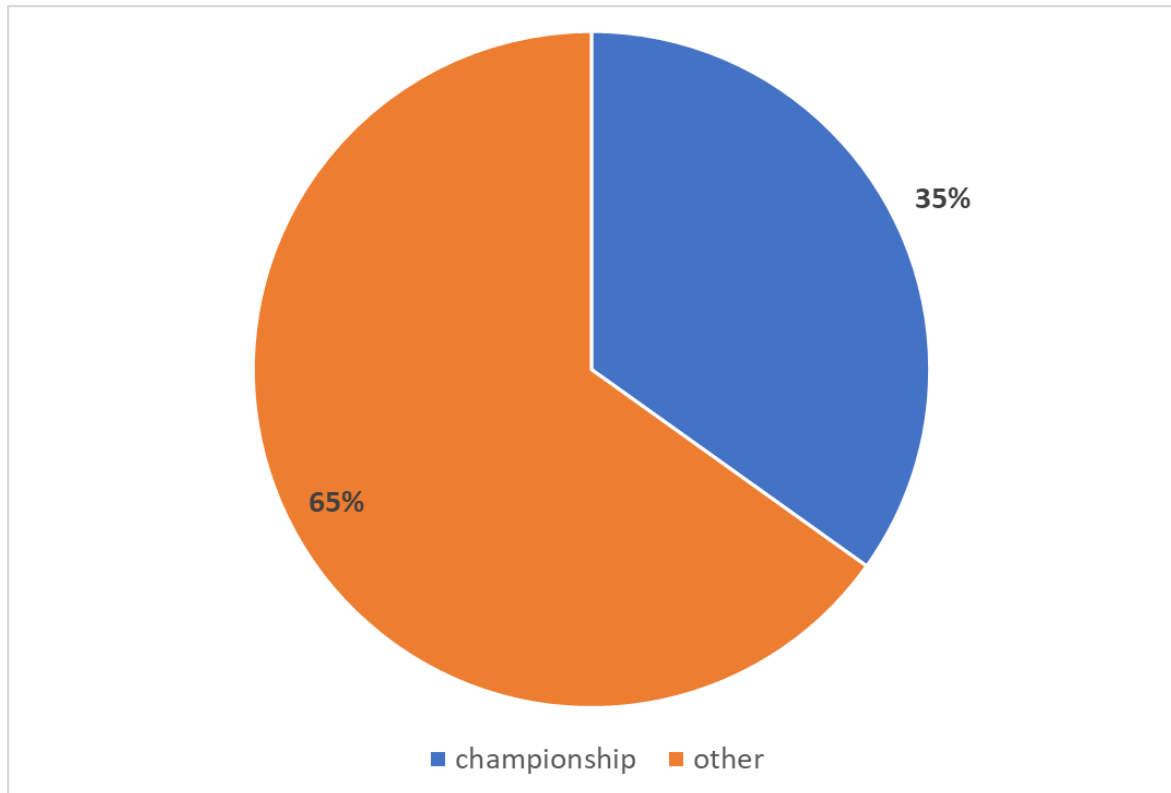
The 5k series remains most popular, with 217 Striders in total having completed one or more 5ks' (195 in 2023, 166 in 2022).





# Saffron Striders Running Club

Championship races have also attracted large number of Striders: 211 in total (197 in 2023).



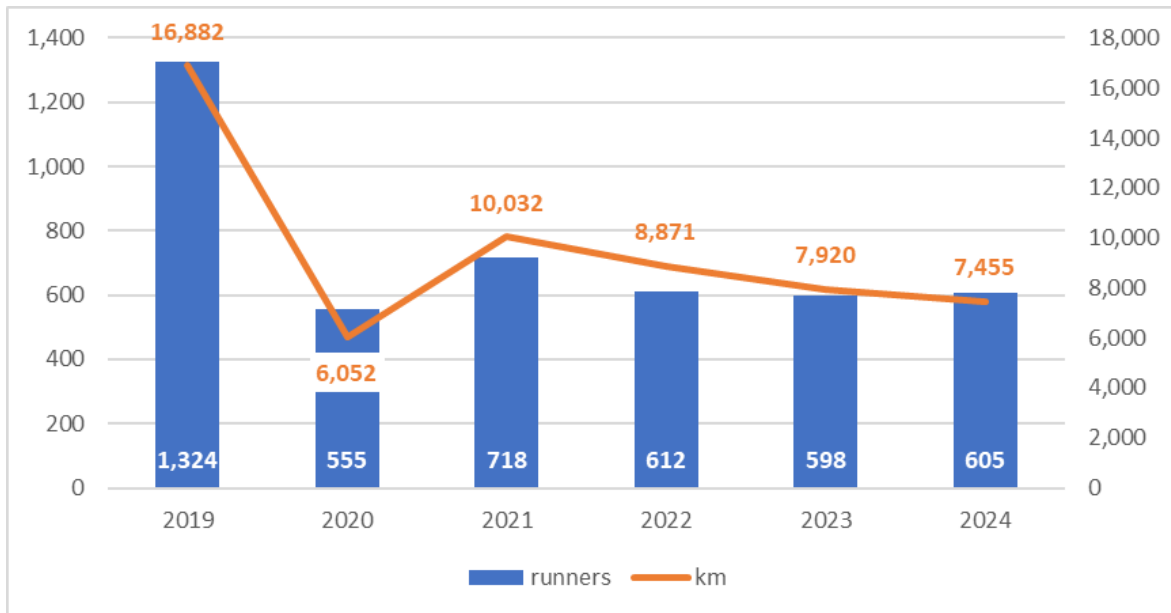
Participation in the XC league keeps trending down. 62 Striders have scored points in these events in 2024 (79 in 2023, 97 in 2022).

Comparing 2024 race stats with previous 5 years (2019 to 2023) shows a big impact from covid, Striders were significantly more active in races in 2019. This reflects bigger club size before the pandemic, but also a general decreasing trend in races attendance across running clubs in our area.

The downward drift however seems to have flattened out now and hopefully we will invert the trend in 2025.



# Saffron Striders Running Club



Most attended race in 2024 was the 5k at carver’s barracks, where 80 Striders crossed the finish line. This is an outstanding record beating 69 Striders in 2023.

Outside championship and league races, the Cambridge Half Marathon was again the most popular event for striders this year (25 Striders Vs. 18 in 2023). Remembrance Races at Carver’s Barracks also attracted a large crowd (14 Striders in the 5k event, 2 in the 10k and 1 in the Half Marathon). 10 Striders completed the London Marathon in 2024!

	striders			
1	80	5k league	home	championship
2	33	5k league	haverhill	
3	31	xc league	home	
4	30	5k league	newmarket	
5	29	10k	ashdon	championship
6	28	5k league	histon	
7	28	5k league	royston	
8	27	10k	abington	championship
9	25	HM	cambridge	
10	19	xc league	ware	
11	19	10k	hbo	championship
12	18	5k league	ely	
13	14	10k	flaming june	championship
14	14	5k	remembrance	
15	12	xc league	harlow	
16	10	M	london	

Marco is disappointed that Cross Country participation is down in numbers, not only with our club but all local running clubs.





---

# Saffron Striders Running Club

Alistair asks Iain Rogers if Parkrun numbers were down. Iain says that numbers could be slightly down locally, with Haverhill down to 40'ish.

Alistair ponders that it could be the rising price of events and covid clawback could still be at cause.

The question was asked if there has ever been a Saffron Walden Parkrun, Audley End? Alistair replies that someone would have to run it. This would be a big financial commitment and Iain reiterates that a big core team of volunteers would be needed and the cost of setting up would be about four and a half thousand. Unfortunately whilst Saffron Striders are not in position to take this on, if one was organised in SW then I'm sure many members would want to see it a success and offer to volunteer to make it so.

## **Race Coordinator**

Alistair gives a brief summary:

Can I just say that Fliss has done a really fantastic job as Race Co-ordinator for the 5k Summer Series. She also ran the home leg of the Cross Country Series. Ian MacDougall has kindly jumped in and taken the reigns and has booked Joyce Franklin Academy for our home race. Fliss has done a great handover pack, "how-to-do" booking and applying etc. for the 5K and Cross Country. And John James has thankfully offered to take stewardship of the role. With the help of WhatsApp it has made this sort of stuff much easier to organise. We did used to win the Cross Country in years gone by so it would be nice to see us return to winning form in years to come.

John Heaney asks about the possibility of arranging a fast 5k on the track? A couple of times maybe in the Summer? A lot of people would be would be interested! We could charge say £5 and run 4/5 races through the evening? There would have to be a maximum amount of applicants that could be set off in 'waves'. It was mentioned that this was similar to 'Night of PBs' held at Highgate Running Club, which ends the evening in a beer tent! Kerry also suggests a 1 mile race. Alistair refers back to our Fast 5 event that was 6 months in the planning by Helen and James Hewlett and would welcome anyone to come forward to instigate. Alistair would talk to C+C and to get their thoughts and the Committee would discuss at the next meeting.

## **Kit/Merchandising Officer**

Report from Paula Thurston (Welfare/Kit)

Paula reports the arrival of a new club vest should be available after Christmas available in yellow and purple. Margit asks the possibility of a fitted cropped vest? Thomas suggest sourcing magnetic race number buttons? Paula would enquire. Arthur asks about a high end shirt such as Soar Running? He would be happy to spend £68 for a high quality shirt, what do other people think? Paula confirms that we currently pay about £20. Maybe we could arrange for individual commissions/one offs.



---

# Saffron Striders Running Club

Alistair mentions that Paula has a new flag coming and jokes that an Event Shelter would be nice too if we could source one at a reasonable cost.

## Social Events Officer

With the absence of a Social Events Officer Alistair mentions that there has been a recent 'Captains Drinks' evening. He gratefully welcomes Lyn Hudson to the Committee and if anyone has any social ideas they can now talk with Lyn, now voted in as our new SEO. Alistair puts forward a request for an "away day", maybe a 10k somewhere by the sea would be a great day out.

## Club Captains

Charlotte Diggins give her report.

### *Captain's report*

*It has been great to welcome new members to the club and a particular highlight has been having some younger members join the club to run over the University holidays. I was really pleased that the Club was able to offer students a reduced rate to enable them to join.*

*Ladies' participation in the Winter Cross Country Races still continues to waiver. To try to ascertain what the barriers might be to participating, we conducted a survey earlier this year. In response to some of the areas raised we ran a trail race taster yesterday (I'd like to extend my thanks to Mike Bradley) to give an idea of what to expect and we shared the dates of the races as early as we could. We'll be offering a buddy service and facilitating lift sharing too to encourage greater numbers to come along.*

*We hosted two Captains' pub crawls this year (March and November) and both were well attended.*

## Welfare Officers

Paula Thurston and Thomas Roelleke gave their reports.

Thomas had tested the new kit and happy that it feels really nice but has a handwash label and Paula would follow up with Graeme at Saffron Apparel.

A Striders cheque for £200 was passed on to the Food Bank for the monies raised from the Annual Dinner's heads and tails game. Paula also intends to arrange for a First Aid refresher course maybe in March tbc.

Paula confirms that there has been no welfare issues to deal with this year. Alistair reminds everyone that we still have a bursary fund. Mike Bradley suggests that it could be used to subsidise trail shoes which would encourage more attendance in the Cross Country Series.

Alistair suggests asking Up'n'Running if there was a possibility that we could have a discount code for the Winter season.

## Chairman



# Saffron Striders Running Club

Alistair mentions that it has been fantastic to have some “new blood” on the committee and that he has been chairman for coming up to 9 years (but still a way to go before he reached Nigel Coates record of 12 years). He was happy to stand again for the post of Chairman and joked that when he reached 10 years anyone would be welcome to take over.

## 6. Election of the Executive Officers

- Chairman
- Treasurer
- Secretary

Nominations were received for the role for the role of Club Chairman, Club Secretary and Club Treasurer and Alistair, Linda and Ian were happy to remain within their posts for the coming year and as there had been no further representations or proposals for these roles there was no need to hold a vote and they were duly re-elected.

Name	Role	Proposer	Second
Alistair Cooke	Chairman	Linda Brett	Paula Thurston
Ian MacDougall	Treasurer	Alan Jones	Linda Brett
Linda Brett	Secretary	Paula Thurston	Alistair Cooke

## 7. Election of the Committee Members

The Executive Officers had determined that the Committee should continue to be made up of the following roles:

- Membership Officer
- Coaching Officer
- Communications Officer
- Race Coordinator
- Kit/Merchandising Officer
- Social Events Officer
- Club Captain Female
- Club Captain Male
- Welfare Officer Female
- Welfare Officer Male

All of these roles had been duly notified to members when the agenda was circulated on the 11th November 2024 prior to the AGM.

Standing down at this AGM is Fliss Tournant. Alistair thanked Fliss for her time in post and wished her well.

Proposals had been received to stand for positions so again there was no need to take this to a vote and the following members were elected into these posts for the year ahead.

Name	Role	Proposer	Second
Claire Steel	Membership Officer	Linda Brett	Thomas Roelleke



# Saffron Striders Running Club

Dickon Clark	Communications Officer	Marco Arcidiacono	Alistair Cooke
Paula Thurston	Kit and Ladies Welfare Officer	Linda Brett	Alistair Cooke
Lyn Hudson	Social Events Coordinator	Linda Brett	Alistair Cooke
Alan Jones	Men's Captain	Ian MacDougall	Linda Brett
Charlotte Diggins	Ladies' Captain	Alistair Cooke	Linda Brett
Marco Arcidiacono	Coaching Officer	Ian MacDougall	Alan Jones
John James	Race Coordinator	Alistair Cooke	Ian MacDougall
Thomas Roelleke	Men's Welfare Officer	Alistair Cooke	Paula Thurston
Vacancy	Club Development Officer		

## 8. Voting on resolutions proposed by member:

No resolutions were received.

## 9. AOB

Margit asks if there would be a gym session over winter at Linton VC. Alistair updates us that a vote was taken and resulted with 50% Track / 25% Indoors / 25% Either. The question was asked which one is cheaper? Alistair responds that it was £320 for Linton VC, Carver sessions were £80 a week in the winter and £60 in the Summer. He had a worrying email from the MOD that the rate would be increased, but they thankfully retracted. He commented that at some stage they will need to resurface the track but wasn't sure how this would affect the club. Currently C+C pay £50 per hour for the use of Wilberforce Road track including showers and bar facilities! Presently WaldenTRI use Carver on a Monday, C+C Tues and Weds with SS there on Thursdays and currently no one is hiring regularly on a Friday.

Will Coaches be updating the sessions on a Thursday was asked? Craig Dyce shared his sessions originally. Marco was happy to suggest new sessions now that he had taken the role as Coaching Officer.

Mike Bradley alerts us of some Guide Runners issues and suggests that there should be a 'Guide Runners rules/instruction' somewhere as to what is expected. Bring a phone, tell people you are running at the back as a group as slowest runner etc. Tim McMahon suggests that moving forward we could do the mirror run/reverse maybe on wk2 and wk4 and that there are 2 suggested 5k routes on the website. Alistair reaffirms that we have a lot more people now than before. So only twice a year, one at the Summer, one in the Winter. John suggests we could send a weekly email with suggested route. Tim confirms that he does a reminder email already.



---

# Saffron Striders Running Club

Alistair formally closed the AGM at 9:54 and wished all the Striders a very Merry Christmas.