Ambleside Athletic Club

AGM Minutes 26/11/2024

The meeting started at 8.02pm (after some excellent pizza's, thanks to Ben Ab for sorting) with 42 members present

1. **Chairpersons Report 2024 (Chris H)**: Apologies received from Graham Day, Mark Braithwaite, Dan Dux, Sarah Mc, Krystal and Richard Lecky-Thompson

   Writing this 2024 report I started with asking a question(s): what makes a successful running club and how do you define a successful year?

   Maybe it's through athletic achievement and how many Champs awards our members have won. Maybe it's through growth in our membership. Or is it about how many club members are actively participating in the club in some way through training, racing, or volunteering? Or what we put back into the sport of fell running as a whole? A club with stable finances? Or maybe it's how well we are developing the Juniors who are the future of the club.

   When I read through the list above, I'm reminded of how we should undoubtedly be very proud of what our club achieved in 2024, and not be afraid to say so! Our elite athletes have once again led the way in so, so many races and team competitions, it's such a long list of victories and successes I could fill this whole report with them. We have English & British Champions racing in our vests from Juniors, through U23's, Seniors and Veterans categories. The number of club members wearing international vests of various countries is numerous and impressive. We successfully competed in fell relays at the 'podium end' of the competitions despite some teams being beset by bad luck with illness & injuries.

   The last year has been a particularly big one in the respect of organising our own AAC races. In 2024 we organised 12 fell races, none bigger than the British Champs event that we held at Blisco in July. These races are some of the very best in the fell running calendar, but they also place a huge volunteer demand on our members. In total we had 176 different people helping at our races, which represents an enormous commitment. I can't thank the RO's who make these races happen enough, nor the club members who stood on top of summits like Esk Pike, the Scafell's, Wetherlam, Swirl How, Bowfell, Crinkle Crags, Blisco etc in lousy conditions so these races could happen. We regard the 12 races we organise as an absolute maximum otherwise we risk over-loading and creating a problem of 'volunteer fatigue'; this is also why we never pass on requests from other races or events for volunteers.

   This theme of putting something through volunteering into the club was partly behind the new relay selection policy that was voted in back in January. I know not

all members were in favour of this, but I also know that the vast majority were, recognising that being able to wear our blue & green vest in the relays is something that has to be earned, and not just through athletic performance & ability. This policy will be re-visited again at the Jan 2025 Committee meeting, so please come along if you have an opinion (I know many of you do!).

Many members are probably not aware that each week we have around 60-70 children running around various parks, fells, roads and tracks in the area. Most of these are in and around Ambleside, but we also have an active Junior section over at Broughton where 20+ children train within the clubs responsibility. 2024 saw an enormous task completed by our Junior Coordinators in putting in place a new Coaching framework for the club that complies with the complex & demanding England Athletics guidelines that exist. This is at the same time as our Coaches have undertaken numerous Coaching courses as we increase our ability to be able to Coach more children in a safe and responsible manner. We are all acutely aware that the bridge from Juniors to Seniors is a tough one, and I hope to be able to report back in a years' time on how we have improved integration between different age groups of the club. It's an area that needs more focus.

Returning to the question of what makes a successful club, the one way I certainly have never regarded success is through growing our membership. This has never been an objective of the club; it might happen because we are a club that people wish to join, but a growing membership can place additional pressures on our Coaches, Committee members & volunteers. It also throws up challenges regarding due diligence in the regard of safety. We cannot be responsible for each & every member being equipped to head out onto the fells, but we can provide training opportunities for our members to be able to gain the knowledge & skills required. This is one of the reasons why in the last year we organised training sessions with Ambleside MRT and also asked Jo Shelmerdine to coordinate 'mountain safety' within the club. More sessions are planned for 2025.

We also look forward in 2025 to our club Costa Blanca trip, which is the first 'semi-organised' club holiday we have done for many years, and to a talk on Sports nutrition from Renee which we also have arranged for February.

I'll finish off this report with a huge 'thank you' to the RO's, Committee members, Team Captains, Coaches & Training Coordinators, and the Volunteers at races who made 2024 the year it was. And in particular to Chris Giles, Krystal Garnett, Ben Abdelnoor & Jack Wright who are stepping down from their committee roles after this AGM. They have all made out- standing contributions to the club.

I consider it a privilege to be Chair of Ambleside AC, am proud to hold this role (for at least one more year) and look forward to 2025 with energy, enthusiasm and optimism!

Chris Hodgson

2 **Treasurers report and annual accounts (Chris G)**: the club is in an excellent position financially with funds of close to £12k. We made a profit of £1300 in 2024, with ALL races making a profit. Huge expenditure on training this year for junior coaches..£2.5k. Funds generated are mainly from our growing membership base and from the races that we organise. The intention is to continue to spend some of our funds in support of club events and activities but keeping the balance around the 12-14k mark.

3 **Membership Secretary's update:** (Chris G) reported that we now have 382 members and in the last 12 months this has remained similar to 2023. All memberships are completed through SI now. The decision for 2025 is to keep fees at £10 but we will review annually alongside SI costs.

4 **Election of Committee Members (CH)**

Standing down… Chris Giles after 5 years as Treasurer, Krystal as Membership Secretary/Newsletter, Ben as Men's Vets Captain and Jack as Men's Open Captain.

Proposed Treasurer.. Rob Harper (Chris H, seconded Jo Shelmerdine)

Proposed Membership Secretary Katie Percival…Cath Musetti, seconded John Gomersall)

Proposed Newsletter Andy Griffiths… (Bobby GS, seconded Tom Hare)

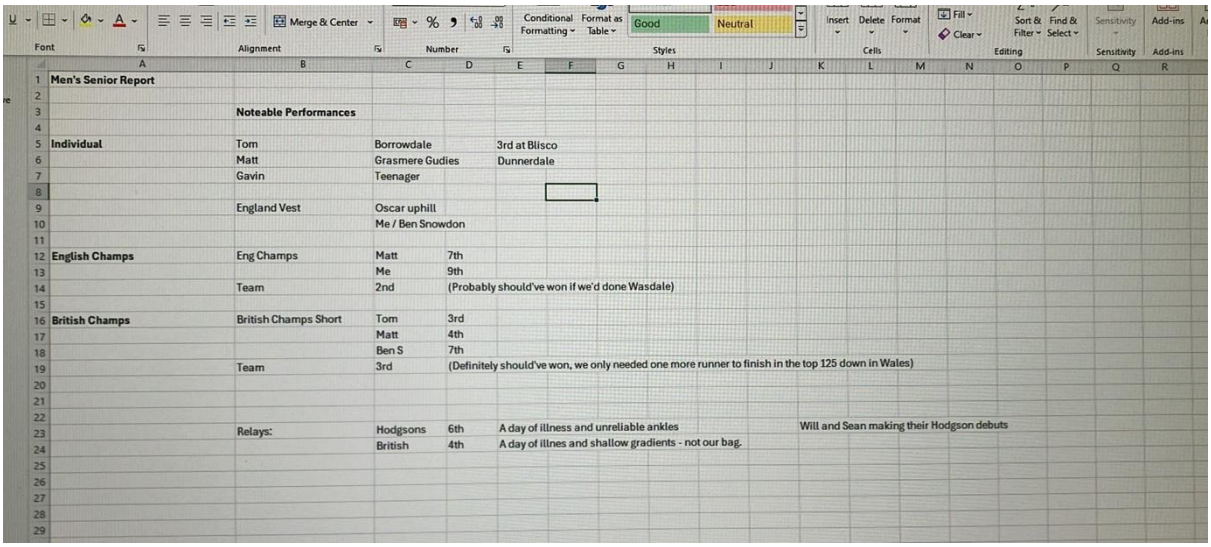
Proposed Mens Vet Captain Chris Roberts.. (Chris H, seconded Rob Harper)

Proposed Mens Open Captain Matt Elkington…(Ben, seconded Jack)

All voted and agreed

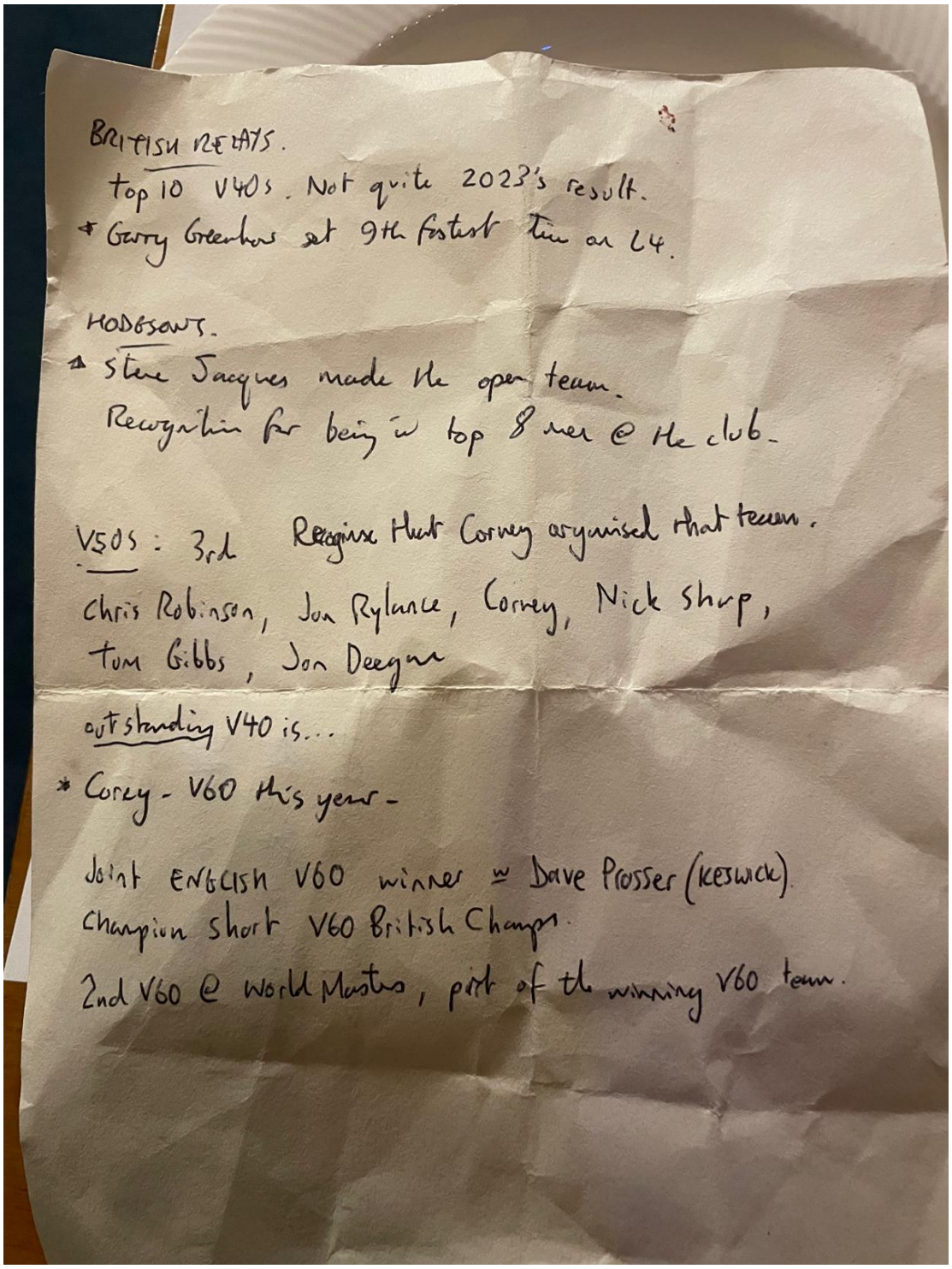
5 **Club Captain's updates:**

Senior Men (Team Sexy Elite') – Jack Wright



Men's Senior Report					
	Noteable Performances				
Individual	Tom	Borrowdale		3rd at Blisco	
	Matt	Grasmere Gudies		Dunnerdale	
	Gavin	Teenager			
	England Vest	Oscar uphill			
		Me / Ben Snowdon			
English Champs	Eng Champs	Matt	7th		
		Me	9th		
	Team	2nd	(Probably should've won if we'd done Wasdale)		
British Champs	British Champs Short	Tom	3rd		
		Matt	4th		
		Ben S	7th		
	Team	3rd	(Definitely should've won, we only needed one more runner to finish in the top 125 down in Wales)		
	Relays:	Hodgsons	6th	A day of illness and unreliable ankles	Will and Sean making their Hodgson debuts
		British	4th	A day of illnes and shallow gradients - not our bag.	

Men’s Vets (Ben Abdelnoor)



Women Vets 40 (jane Reedy)

That we were 3rd in relays. We have a great team of ladies although we don't necessarily all attend training/ champs races. Lou did amazingly in FRA champs races as v45 and 50 winner 2nd in world masters and Hazel 3rd in world masters.

Senior Women (Antonia Fan)

The women have had an awesome year and I want to start off saying that out of all the years I have been captain, this year I have been the most inspired by my team members. Not only in their performances but their morale.

Team Achievements:
* British Championships Team win with podium performances from Ambleside team members Eve and Antonia.
* English Championships Team win with multiple podium performances from Ambleside team member Eve Pannone.
* 2nd at Hodgsons and the British relays.
* Lakeland classics Team win.

Individual Achievements:
* Eve Pannone represented GB at Europeans, 2nd at Snowdon, 2nd at the Senior Home International, 1st at the Blisco British Champs.
* Scout also represented GB at Europeans and came an outstanding 2nd up hill only, 4th up/down
* Bryony Halcrow has had many wins this year including the 3 Yorkshire Peaks Cyclo Cross for the second year running.
* Lexi Whitaker won the U23 English Champs overall as well as many individual wins. She has also represented England at Snowdon and Trofeo Vanoni.

I'd like to say a massive thank you to everyone that has represented and supported the club. It makes my role a lot easier and incredibly rewarding.

Women Vet 50/60's (Cath Musetti)

We have over 51 members in the 50 and over female vet category which is very healthy- and growing! It's a real honour to represent and support such a fantastic and talented group of ladies from 50-80 years who regularly exercise in the hills and fells around us- for fun!
This group is very disparate and ranges from current British and English Champions to runners and walkers who love to participate for fun and friendship but don't compete in races.
We are very proud of 2024 British and English Champion (and second in the Worlds) Lou Osborn and Hazel Robinson who was 3rd in the world champs despite having an injured foot!
Whether a serious racer or a loving running for fun member, all our ladies seem to have one thing in common- resilience and a love of being with friends on the hills. Some are just more competitive than others.
Attendance at training is excellent with numbers particularly high on Tuesday and Friday mornings with a regular very strong turnout and some really great long routes covered this year.
Evening training sessions are also well attended by a smaller group of vets on Tuesdays and in the winter the track sessions at the Phoenix have been endured (lol) by a small hardy few(thanks to Rob)
Fewer ladies have managed to race in the blue and green vest this year than in the past (with the exception of Lou) although a small number have turned out to a good number of races including local fell races, Lakeland trails, long distance challenges and road races as well as challenges further afield.Sara Staniek took part in the Serre Zinal race in Switzerland in August coming in a fantastic first F60, I loved taking part in the Italian Chianti Classico In may (2nd) and Kate Ayres has won several races in Spain. Newcomer Jane Robert's achieved first place at the Howgills half marathon and recently competed in her first ever fell race at Dunnerdale aged 60.
Wendy Birkett was 1st in the Cheshire Triathalon, and Dot Pelly has been competing regularly in orienteering and mountain trials as well as Lakeland trails all year. We have taken part in the Peris, the 3 Peaks, Ennerdale, The Newlands and Duddon long as well as many shorter races.
We really have lots of talent and when we take part we often come in the top 3
Sadly, due to injury and illness we did not manage to get a team in the British relays this year or compete in the English championship races. There were also few vet females competing in the club champs this year, which is a shame.
So with such a large talent pool and given that 4 of the 6 nominated races are based in the Lakes in 2025, I want to target much better participation in the English Championships and the club champs. I believe that with increased awareness of dates and entry cut offs we could get many more taking part and we could realistically aim for some great results both individually and team (F 50 and 60 level) I'll be using the existing WhatsApp group to continue to share dates and encourage reccys early in the year. Similarly it would be great to get healthy participation in the club champs next year.
Exciting times ahead. I just want to thank everyone for your friendship, support and shared love of the fells and for making my job easier by your enthusiasm. Thanks must also go to the wonderful

vets ladies and men who regularly support club races by marshalling, providing refreshments , on registration, looking after kit and many other jobs behind the scenes. Your support does not go unnoticed by us all.
Cath Musetti
F60 Captain AAC

6 **Social Secretary update: Helen H** In Sarah Mc's absence. Sarah organised 2 socials plus the upcoming Xmas bash. 80+ at Spring Social and 50+ at Autumn one..both at Force Café, Ambleside. 116 takers for the Xmas bash at the Tap Yard, Ambleside on 6th Decemberl.

7 **Report from Training groups**

a. **John Gomersal** gave a summary of the incredibly well supported Tues/Fri morning running groups who regularly have 20+ runners and up to 20+ walkers out. Several of this group regularly attend races. There needs to be some clarity on ability and routes as still have some attending with insufficient knowledge.

Tuesday Friday morning runners.

Continuing to be a well attended sessions.
Usually seen as a social run rather than heavy training sessions, with plenty of chatter and coffee after.
The usual session is about 10k and usually out in the fells for 90 mins but have been known to be out for 3.5 hours. Areas covered range from Threlkeld and Bassenthwaite in the north to Sizergh and Whitbarrow in the south.
The group size can vary with the largest attendance being 38 members turning up for a run from Bays Brown Farm. On average about 25 with around half the number can be walking.
Mixed group: runners, walkers and dog walker. Still some cycling. Angie often cycles to the event before walking and then cycling home.
Due to the size of the group it is difficult to keep up with the range of injuries, medical conditions and spare parts that the group now have.
Whilst the group is prominently those who are retired, Some younger members are joining us when they have time off work or their work pattern makes it difficult to join the Tuesday evening sessions. This brings the average of the group down to about 60. Any member of the club is welcome to join these sessions.
A group of 9 went to the alps and walked the TMB over 7 days. Report on the club website
As the size of the group has increased the dynamics of group running has changed. These runs are social runs and not led or organised runs and everyone should be confident to look after themselves in the mountains

b. **Rob Short** gave feedback on the very successful track sessions on a Thursday night at the Phoenix track, with numbers around 20. All age groups attending from some of the more senior Juniors through to vets. These are being well received and Rob's structured training sessions much appreciated.

8. Club Champs (John G): 12 races this year.

Kirkstone handicap still to run.

Based on results after 11 races:

Women:
38 member have done 1 or more club champs races.
4 members have done or can still do 5 club champs races.

Men:
72 members have done 1 or more club champs races.
19 members have done or can still do 5 club champ races.

Under 18
1 member has done 2 or more club champs races 1 member can still do 3 club champs races.

Age groups:

MV40: 11 (No one completed 5) MV50: 12
MV60: 5
MV70: 1 (No one completed 5)

WV40: 6
WV50: 5 (No one completed 5) WV60: 4 (No one completed 5) WV70: 0

Club Champs 2025
14 races; any 5 to count: (3 if Under 18)

See club website or FRA Calendar for details

9. Juniors update: Please see the reports attached from Paula, who attended, and Lecky who sent his apologies.

Ambleside AC Juniors. AGM Report November 2024

'The Ambleside Section'

Training/Coaches

The Junior section is still thriving and growing and is very well supported by the parents of the children who attend.

There are 88 juniors on our register aged between 8yrs and 15 years old with an average of 50 children attending training sessions each week.

There are 10 children on the waiting list aged 8+, as all our groups are currently full. There are 12 under 8s on the waiting list and will remain there until they turn 8.)

We have 5 groups with 6 LiRF Qualified coaches; 4 of these also have the coaching assistant qualification. We have 4 Coaching assistants without LiRF supporting the coaches and 5 DBS checked volunteers who regularly accompany the

groups.
All our coaches and volunteers are now either DBS checked or are awaiting the outcome of their application.
Moving forward, we still require an Athletics Coach to oversee session plans and be present at the venue. Many thanks to Sarah Mc who is currently checking our session plans.
Myself and Sarah Hodgson are looking out for a regional Athletics Coach Course which we can attend.
The junior section now has separate insurance to cover us until we comply with UKA regulations.
(Training continues from the park for a few more weeks and then transfers to The Phoenix Track in January until around March time. Our older juniors (14yrs plus) have been welcomed to the senior track session. Many thanks to Rob for accommodating them.

Racing

As a club we have had a successful racing season, both nationally and locally. 26 of our junior runners competed in 1 or more of the 2024 FRA Junior Championship Series. Overall the club finished in 2nd place (missing out on 1st place by 1 point!) The Under 13 boys and Under 15 girls received the Participation Award for their age groups. Also there was an individual 3rd place for U13 Mila Baron and individual 1st place for U13 Tom Craker.
9 runners have also competed in the BOFRA series with an individual 1st place for U17 Cara Bradley and an individual 3rd place for U12 Lawrie Belshaw and 2nd place for U12 for Lola Hodgson. Many more of our runners have participated in local events such as Ambleside Sports, Langdale Gala and Grasmere Sports and have enjoyed the social aspect of family days out with other club members.
Our Club Championship is now complete for this year; 42 runners completed the required 6 races to earn their Club Champs placing and prize. Our awards and presentation event took place this weekend and was a real celebration of the commitment of the children to their training and racing, the parents who support them and the coaches and volunteers who give their time each week.
The junior club extends its thanks to the Committee (in particular Chris G & Chris H) who have supported the progression of the Junior section and helped us navigate UKA coaching requirements!
I will just share this quote from one of the parents who posted on the Whats App group, 'What a year for the Club. You are all amazing and we are proud to be part of it!'

The Broughton Runners Section compiled by Richard Lecky Thompson

Broughton Runners has gone from strength to strength this year.
Helen Lecky-Thompson has qualified as an Athletics Coach and is now completely in charge.
Richard Lecky-Thompson is providing support where necessary.
Agnes Nagy has qualified as an Assistant Coach and Edward Cowley is booked on the course in the New Year.
There are ample volunteers and they all have DBS checks.
The biggest change is that the club has split into two groups, U11s and U11s. They both meet on a Friday evening, at 5.30 and 6.30pm. This allows Helen to better differentiate the training for the different groups.

There are 24 on the register in the younger group and 9 in the older group.
Some of the older group help out with the younger ones before their session.
During the winter season we have 2 weeks outside and 1 week inside. While inside we focus on technique work for the Minis and circuit work for the Teens.

10 Club Achievement Awards (Helen H): I will send out a Google poll allowing all members to vote for this year's nominees for the Club Male and Female Athletic Achievement Awards and Vet of Note Award (The Roger Bell trophy). There is also the Dave Holcroft 'unsung hero' award that is chosen by the previous winner. Chris Giles is the current holder and as his choice of recipient will not be at the Xmas do, then this was presented at the AGM…John Gomersall in recognition of all the work he quietly does in the background for the Tuesday/Friday group and sorting the Club Champs. Congratulations John.

Remainder of the prizes will be presented at the Club Xmas dinner 6th Dec

11 AOB….

Jo Shelmerdine mentioned that there will be regular mountain safety updates and also the First Aid Course in January .

Ben mentioned that 2025 will be the last year of Great Lakes race. Britta and him, after 10 years of organising are finishing and Jean at Stool End would only want the race to continue if they were organising.
Kirkstone Handicap..only 10 places left…but actually that has now happened and record number of participants..54 on the usual murky night that is all too familiar.

Selwyn is stepping down as RO for 3 Shires with Jack taking over and Sean Lecky now joining the team.

AAC Secretary…I intend to step down at the end of 2025 after 3 years as Secretary. If anyone is interested and wants to find out more…give me a shout.

The meeting closed at 9.15pm.