Ambleside Athletics Club

AGM Minutes 2/12/2025

The meeting started at 7.50pm (after some excellent soup, bread, flapjack from Helen/Chris, plus a few treats from Rob S courtesy of Cornish Bakery), with 28 members present.
2024 AGM Minutes offered as true and correct…vote unanimous.

1. **Chairpersons Report 2025 (Chris H)** Apologies received from Cath Musetti, Jane Reedy, Matt Elkington, Graham Day and Katie Percival.

It's my last year as Chair (providing you vote me in for one more year!) and one of the things we felt as if it was time to address was the fact that the Chair role, in line with our club, has grown significantly over the last 10 years. It's for this reason, and also because we wanted to allow for some succession planning, that we have the roles to vote on the agenda later this evening.

I'm going to start my Chair report with our youngest section of the running club, our Juniors, who as we will hear later, go from strength to strength both here in Ambleside and Broughton. I was honoured to be invited to present trophies at the end of year awards last weekend; what a brilliant occasion. Loads of enthusiastic kids, all backed up by a terrific team of Coaches and volunteers. And a total of 93 participants in the Junior Club Champs, from first timers up to seasoned Internationals…..let that sink in…..93 children! Watching both Charlie and Rowan, who were Ambleside Junior members for many years, compete recently in the Senior Men's relay team this year showed us the value of good support & coaching; I'm sure there will be more to follow. But it's also the opportunity to participate in sport which shines through, and for our juniors the enjoyment & participation of the kids will always trump performance. I will single out Sarah and Paula for their coordination of our Juniors, which has been exceptional. Thank you to both of them and indeed all the Junior Coaches & volunteers.

Our levels of participation in our Seniors are similarly impressive; nearly 140 members took part in at least one Club Champs race, and we saw 76 racing at

Dunnerdale fell race alone, which was surely a club record for the number of blue & green vests in one single race.

Let's not pretend otherwise, we are a BIG club now; desperately wanting to keep the spirit of being small, informal & friendly, whilst also having to put in place the protocols & organisational structure of being a club with nearly 500 members, ranging from 8-yrs old to 80-yrs+. I'm not going to pretend that this isn't a challenge at times!

Once again, we organised 12 Senior races this year, including one for the last time (well, for a year at least!); I can't thank the RO's who organise these races enough, with special thanks to Ben & Britta who retired themselves from Great Lakes, and our new RO's Sean Leckey, Jack Wright & Neil McKenzie. It's true that some of our races had real challenges this year with biblical weather like at 3-Shires, but our organisational capability & club volunteer support shone through. As Rob Harper will show you shortly, the races we organise play a huge role in supporting our club finances, as well as providing iconic fell races in their own right. It's for these reasons reason that I urge, and truly believe, that EVERY SINGLE club member who competes in an Ambleside AC vest should volunteer at least once at an AAC organised race. It's in our DNA……. and it always should be.

Our Elite athletes have had another stellar year, and the light that shines brightest at the top of the podium is often blue & green; I'm not going to steal the thunder from our Team Captain's by listing their achievements, but wow, what a year. Huge congratulations from us all, we take enormous pride from your successes and the way you represent our club with both enthusiasm and integrity.

Equally, I get undeniable satisfaction & enjoyment from the random events & initiatives kicked off by members outside of races too; Carboard Wayne's upcoming 'Wansfell Wobble' taking in 3 ascents of Wansfell and 3 pubs along the way; Bobby's even more epic '5 times up & down Loughrigg, with 5 pints thrown in, inside 5 hours.' On such occasions are club stories & legends made, and the spirit of our club shines at its brightest.
I was lucky to marshal at the top of Blisco at Great Lakes this year and seeing Carolyn Menaud taking on that last climb with sheer persistence and bloody mindedness…. well success can be defined in so many different ways but make no mistake here it was in evidence again.

I was also fortunate this year to go along on the club 'Training Camp' to Calpe in Spain, the first 'open' club trip we have organised for several years. What a fantastic few days it was; a mixture of social fun, exercise in the outdoors, a keenly fought football match…. and even a running race thrown in! Everyone loved it so much we're doing the same next year. And I can't wait.

This enjoyment is all in sharp contrast to the pain we all felt when we heard of the accident & misfortunes suffered by loyal club members James Harris and Calvin Routledge this year. It's a reminder for us all to appreciate fully the opportunity we have to participate in the sport we love, the comradery & social fun we get from our club, and to enjoy these moments when we can. We send our very best wishes to both James and Calvin for their continued recovery.

A final word of thanks to our Committee and RO's, who I, and **all of you here**, are indebted to for their contribution to the club. From taking training sessions to providing welfare support, from coordinating membership applications, managing social media & newsletters, to looking after our £'s and pennies, to helping educate & train us on 1st Aid, mountain safety & nutrition. Your contribution is immense and is so greatly appreciated by me and all our members.

I say this every year, but I mean every word, when I say I'm proud to be Chair of this fantastic running club and am honoured to be in this role for my last 12 months (if elected!).
Chris Hodgson (Chair)

2. Treasurers Report (Rob H)

Notes to the AAC Accounts for 12 months to 31/10/25:

Ambleside Juniors hold £246 in cash and have banked £1200 after year end (to appear in the next Accounts). Broughton Juniors hold £82 in cash.
The Juniors received £800 in donations and grants during the year, £500 to Ambleside and £300 to Broughton, shown in the respective accounts rather than the Donations Received account.
The club made four donations during the year, totalling £862.

Track hire and trophy engraving costs have been moved to Running Activities.
Equipment purchase has been moved to Non-Running Activities.
Commentary
At year end the club has £3075 in the current account and £8000 in the deposit account, a total of £11,075.
This is down by £1078 over the year, although there has been £1200 of cash banked by Ambleside Juniors after year end which means in reality we are £122 in surplus overall, and the Ambleside and Broughton Juniors hold £328 in cash at year end. The £1200 will appear in next year's accounts.

Club races generated a surplus of £4201 which, even without the Juniors' £1200, exceeded the cost of all Running Activitiesby £191.

Club memberships via Si Entries generated £3450, incurring £389 in fees.
The was also £220 received from 22 members whose direct debits remained active, only one of which was refunded, with that income being treated as Donations Received. The remaining Donations Received comprised money from various club members who kindly refused a refund for tickets to social events.
We also earned our usual £350 for helping at Ambleside Sports.
The memberships income was short of the total Non-Running Activities by £1399, a deficit caused by the purchase of the radios at £1330, training costs of £2154 including £1316 for the first aid course and we subsidised last year's Christmas do to the tune of £453.

The club made four donations during the year, totalling £862:
£586 to GNAA – surplus generated by the Great Lakes race
£52 to LAMRT – for Renee's nutrition talk in February
£100 to Parish Centre for upkeep of the defibrillator
£124 to BHF – some of the surplus from the Seat Sandal race

3. Membership Secretary Update (Katie P)

AAC 2025
Membership STATS

Total members 381
71 joined us in 2025
298 (78%) were members in 2024

Gender and Age Cats

36% Sen
Biggest Vet Cat is VET50, 24%.
63% Male 37% Female
In senior category, gender split is more equal, 42% Female.
Of Vets, 34% Female.

Habitation

20% of members claim to live in Ambleside (75)
But 23% (87) live in Kendal!
Other places to live include Windermere, Ulverston and Broughton.
One member lives in Munich.

Names

Top Boy is John (15) but shout out to Chris (12)
Top Girl is Sarah (5)
AACs 237 Men share just 120 names!

Birthdays

5 members born on New Years Day
132 have a unique birthday… 249 have a birthday twin (or triplet)
Most popular birth month is of course September

4. Club Captains Report

Men's

It has been a fantastic year for the Men's Team. The trend for the season was set early with the team prize at Edale Skyline in March, first of the English Championships, going on to win 5 out of 6 of the English Champs races, only missing out on Whittle Pike having already wrapped up the title. The British was similarly successful, a joint win at Stuc a Chroin then a club trip to Ireland to wrap up the win. This is the first time since 2003 we've won the British and first time since 1991 we've won the English. Thanks to all who travelled to any of these races, there were 13 separate counters across the races showing how important everyone getting involved is as well as how good our depth is at the moment. A further thank you to the club for supporting our trip to Ireland.

Particular highlights in these races were Steve Jacques winning the V45 title and George Baker managing 3rd U23 overall in the English. Charlie Almond and George Baker took 2nd and 3rd at the British Long Champs in Scotland and George took 2nd at the British Short Champs in Ireland. Steve added 3rd V45 at Ireland and Ben Abdelnoor was 1st V40. Oscar managed 4th in Scotland and 3rd at Newlands Memorial, Gavin was 4th at Newlands and Tom Simpson 4th (3rd Englishman) at Borrowdale, Matt Elkington was 3rd in Ireland.

Outside of the English/British Champs, Oscar represented Great Britain at the World Championships in the Uphill Only, finishing a respectable 47th and Tom Simpson won every race in Cumbria that Finlay Wild didn't do (I think). The number of team prizes we wrapped up along the way is too hard to count. Tom Gibbs was 1st Overall at the OMM Long score and Garry, Steve and Matt Brindle in particular did a great job of belying their ages through the year, winning V40 and V45 races at will.

Given our form it's assumed that a stunning win would've been taken at the Hodgsons, we'll just have to wait till next year. This was (or wasn't) followed by a strong 2nd place at the British Relays, claiming the prestigious 'leading for the most time in the race' prize as well as 'first B team' (7th, ahead of Helm A!). 9th V40 and 5th V50 and the beer race in the evening. It was a highly successful and enjoyable trip to Wales and thanks to Antonia for sorting the accommodation and Chris with his help persuading the organizers to give us a B team. Finally, the Vets managed 4th overall at the Three Peaks Relay and our Mixed all ages teams managed 3rd and 10th at the inaugural Eskdale Fell Relays, both of which we'll be doing again next year.

Ladies

This year has showcased the depth and quality of our women’s squad. Eve Pannone delivered race wins and strong placings throughout the English Fell Championships, alongside an excellent run at the Inter-Counties, confirming her place among England’s top fell athletes.

Internationally, Scout Adkin claimed one of the biggest titles in the sport by winning the 2025 WMRA World Cup overall, underlining her world-class consistency across the season.

Bryony Halcrow continued her dominance with a third consecutive victory at the Cyclocross Three Peaks, while Celia Powell celebrated a major milestone with her first England vest at Trofeo Vanoni.

On the skyrunning scene, Natalie Beadle emerged as a rising international contender, completing the full series and delivering a standout performance at the St. Jeoire Sky Race. At home, Sophie Allen secured a superb win at Kentmere.

We also made history at the Great Lakes Race, where Bryony, Georgia and Sophie Rylance swept the podium with an outstanding 1–2–3.
And in another exciting sign of our growing depth, we fielded a second team at the 3 Peaks Relay, opening up huge potential for next year.

Our biggest team success came with the British Fell Championship Relay win, taken by over 10 minutes — a perfect reflection of our strength, unity and enjoyment of the sport. There's no doubt we would have brought the same momentum into the Hodgson Brothers Relay.

These achievements represent only a small snapshot of what has been an incredible year. With the number of talented women in the squad, there's every reason to believe we'll go even bigger next season.

5.Training & Coaching Report (Rob S)

Winter Training
Tuesday and Thursday sessions continue to be well attended. Avg 25 at the track, with a small section of older juniors joining in also.
Coaches/Leaders
I'm collating a list of who we have active in the coaching team. The majority of the club coaches are dedicated to the Junior section given the higher coach ratio required.
In terms of senior coaches we're in good position at the moment as Michelle and I take responsibility for winter sessions, however we would be struggling if one of us wasn't available. In order to future proof the club and give members the opportunity to develop we are looking for more members to become active coaches/leaders to assist the current team.

For those interested, the first step is to undertake a LIRF course, which is made up of online modules, a short virtual classroom and a remote practical activity. We currently have Katie Lord undergoing this and once qualified she can assist me with the sessions and provide cover if and when needed.
If anyone is interested in senior coaching then please get in touch with me.

6.Social Secretary Report (Joe F)

3 Socials held this year so far….Spring, Wilfs, good turnout, Summer…. Washout, literally, at Tweedies, ….Autumn…Tap Yard… Good turnout.

Xmas do planned for 19th December at 'The Venue' in Kendal. AAC had to purchase 120 tickets to guarantee exclusivity for our annual bash and awards ceremony. We still have a number to sell so get in touch with Joe once you pay and with any dietary requirements. Send your £25 to AAC account asap.

Hopefully in 2026 we can look at joint juniors/seniors summer social making use of the free offer and facilities at Grasmere Sports ground. We'll keep you posted.

7. Juniors Report including Broughton (Paula B)

'The Ambleside Section'
Training/Coaches
The Junior section is still growing and is very well supported by the parents of the children who attend. There are 102 juniors on our register aged between 8yrs and 16 years old with an average of 50 children attending training sessions each week.
Currently, there aren't any children on the waiting list.
Coaches / helpers
- We now have 11 coaches at various levels (CA, Lirf, LiRf with off road) Across 6 groups. Each group has an average of 10 runners with a coach and at least 1 adult volunteer.
- Sarah near end of Athletics Coach course (expected completion early 2026).
- There are 14 DBS checked parent helpers.

We are always looking for extra volunteers and are happy to arrange DBS for any interested seniors.

Racing: notable results

We have had another successful racing season, both nationally and locally. Ambleside AC are the FRA Junior Champions for 2025! 39 of our athletes participated in 1 or more FRA races.

The U13 boys and girls and U15 boys are their age category champions. Individual placings went to U13B Kit Evans, U17B Zeke Sumner.

10 of our athletes participated in the BOFRA series. Individual placings achieved by Zeke Sumner and Cara Bradley, who are U17 Champions. U13B Sean Wild Garcia finished in 2nd place.

At the Fell Running County champs, 4 Ambleside juniors represented Cumbria in the U15 teams.

U17 Zeke Sumner represented England this summer.

Club Champs

Our Club Championship is now complete for this year; 94 of our runners participated in our Club Champs races, which were a mixture of in-house races, FRA and local races.

There were 55 juniors who competed in 6 or more Club Champs races and were awarded their t-shirt or hoodie at our Presentation Event the other weekend.

Finances

The weekly subs remain at £1 per runner, so we should average £50 a week, which is paid into club account.

At the recent end of year presentation we made £178 from the raffle to contribute towards the cost of the event.

There was a £500 grant received from a customer of one of our parents, which will also contribute to the cost of Club Champs prizes.

Plans for 2026

plan to offer a juniors mountain safety session with LAMRT again and also a session on juniors First Aid and navigation

Juniors and their families are looking forward to the joint Junior / senior event.

The Broughton Runners Section compiled by Helen Lecky Thompson

We are full with 24 Minis (8yrs-11yrs) and 9 Teens (11yrs-15yrs).

Six of our Teens attend the Minis session as "junior coaches" to get a better understanding of what goes into the coaching and so they have experience for when they're old enough to do the proper qualifications.
Our Minis group is majority boys, however in our Teens group there is a majority of girls.
With winter here we are alternating between inside and outside sessions with both groups.

8. Mountain Safety Report (Jo S)

2025 saw us host 2 sessions on Basic First Aid, 1 at Mountain Rescue in Kendal and 1 at LAMRT here in Ambleside. Both very well attended.

12 members also did a First Aid Course, funded by AAC so we can use those people to provide cover at our races rather than having to pay for external FA. The agreement was that each person would cover one race a year for the 3 years their training covers. This has worked well in 2025.

In 2026 we intend on delivering 2 navigation courses. 1 for beginners, hopefully in April and 1 for intermediates around summer time.

9. Election of Committee Members (Chris H & Helen H)

1. Extension of Chair for 1 more year for Chris H
   Vote unanimous, Proposed, Joe Fisher, Seconded, Jack Fogarty
2. Appoint new role of Deputy Chair, Sophie Owen.
   Vote unanimous, Proposed, Sarah Sigsworth, Seconded, Jack Robinson
3. Merging of Secretary/Membership Secretary role for Katie Percival
   Vote unanimous, Proposed, Kate Ayres, Seconded, Rob Harper
4. Appointment of new Communications Officer, Joe Fisher
   Vote unanimous, Proposed, Sean Leckey, Seconded, Steve Wathall
5. Appoint new Social Secretary, Helen H
   Vote unanimous, Proposed John Gomersall, Seconded, Jo Shelmerdine

10. Club Champs and Presentation of DHMT (John G)

23 men and 11 women managed to complete at least 5 races this year in the chosen Club Champs series.
1 U 18 completed the required 3 races..
All of those will receive the fantastic 2025 Club Champs mugs (artwork courtesy of our very own Jim Tyson) to be presented at the AAC Xmas Bash and Annual Awards, on 19th December.
James Harris will receive an honorary mug. Up until his accident, he was top of the leader board.

As the current holder of the Dave Holcroft Memorial Trophy, it is up to John to pick this year's winner. The Trophy is awarded to a club member that is an 'unsung hero'. It is lovely to see a female receiving this trophy for the first time since its inception.....Michelle Crowley.

Michelle has for years worked on winter and summer training schedules for AAC.
She also hosts our annual Orienteering competition, plotting the course, putting all the flags out and then collecting them all back in. Usually followed by any combination of either soup, cakes or chocolates.
Michelle took over the Loughrigg Silverhowe race for a few years after Jon Broxap gave up. This meant that the race was not 'lost' and has now successfully been added to our list of annual AAC races & listed with the FRA, thanks to Michelle keeping it going in the between times.
As previously mentioned, Michelle now holds very successful structured/painful, Tuesday evening winter training sessions around the many hills of Ambleside as well as eing one of the lead coaches at the Juniors on a Thursday.

Very well deserved Michelle....you are most definitely an unsung hero. Thank You for all you do at AAC.

11. Membership Fees Discussion (All)

Discussion held with all present at AGM whether to leave fees the same at £10 per year or increase. After lots of suggestions to support both points, a vote was held and motion carried to keep the fees at £10 for another year. We will review at 2026 AGM

AOB

Tom W asked if Club Champs mugs can be purchased. CH said they are usually sold at £5 each.
Helen H reported still 3 spare seats on mini bus back to Ambleside after xmas do, £10 per person.

Meeting closed at 9.20pm