

Kent AC agm 2022  
Co presidents' report

We open by giving huge thanks to all those who have given their personal time to keep Kent AC active and flourishing in the last 12 months. Be they team managers, coaches, committee members, event organisers, communications folk, parents or gate volunteers. We know how busy everyone's lives are and the time and efforts given to the club are hugely appreciated and essential to our club's continued success.

Since our last AGM, after years of growth, our membership has stayed exactly the same at 574) with a high proportion of active and local members. The communication within the club has improved significantly over the course of the past few years with the comms team always producing an informative weekly newsletter which is complemented by a strong social media presence. Our pool of coaches and officials continues to grow (but isn't yet big enough) and forms a critical foundation of the club's activities.

After two years disrupted by covid this year has seen a welcome but gradual return to regular competition.

On the country, in senior men's competition our dominance in the Surrey League took a knock, but was slightly compensated by a win in the senior south of the Thames event.

On the track securing promotion in the Southern Athletics League (SAL) was a victory we feel proud of especially as it aligns to our ambitions to reignite ourselves as a multi-disciplined athletics club. It felt good to back at Ladywell arena to host our track club championships this summer (with our first ever field event – long jump – included in September). We saw the return of the Ladywell 10000, which for the first time included segments of the day dedicated to 100m races and a junior handicap race - again demonstrating our desire and commitment to have a broader spectrum of offerings to our members and the broader athletics community .

On the road there were many navy vests at the Manchester and London Marathons, and at the Big Half in September. The Assembly League returned, albeit only 3 fixtures took place. The number of Kent participants, particularly at the first fixture at Beckenham Place Park, goes to prove how popular this event is and we hope things will return to the usual 6 fixtures in 2023. In the national road relays the senior women and men put in comparably good performances: 7/25 and 14/53 respectively. Both were outclassed by the v55 men with 7/34. A first for Kent AC was participation in the Welsh Castles relay; an exhausting trek traversing Wales where the team was rewarded with a 3<sup>rd</sup> place overall. In the London Marathon our first three scoring men: Ross Braden (2.14, 12<sup>th</sup> elite and 3<sup>rd</sup> Briton), Russell Bentley and Joe Hartley, by our calculation, and still subject to confirmation, took the championship for the total quickest time of first three finishers. Many navy blue vests followed.

Mention must be made of Alex Yee's superb achievement of two Commonwealth medals in the triathlon this year.

The most obvious development since pre-covid has been the growth in our junior section, in membership, coaching time and most impressively competition. The continued expansion of our junior section is a key focus area for the club. Not only does it help to build our future bench of athletes, it also demonstrates our commitment to serving the local community. Membership and waiting lists are at an all time high. Moreover from a standing start we fielded teams in all matches and all ages in our inaugural participation in the Kent Young Athletes League. We learned a great deal and that experience will bear fruit next

summer. The energy and enthusiasm of all those involved in the establishing and running of the junior section is palpable and we look forward to seeing it go from strength to strength.

Looking ahead to 2023, a number of committee members are standing down or, subject to membership approval, moving on to new positions. Full details are included in the AGM pack but with thanks to everyone for the time dedicated to their positions in 2022 and previous years. A special mention must be made to Bernie Hutchinson who, after 33 years is reducing his involvement in the membership admin.

In terms of what's ahead, we have worked with new arrangements in Lewisham Council and GLL to maintain access to the track but there are still some finer details to nail down, such as ongoing track fee administration.

In our joint capacity as presidents of the club, along with the committee it is our goal that all members are able to achieve their athletic goals by utilizing the coaching and training opportunities offered by the club; to provide access to meaningful competition irrespective of ability or age; to be friendly, welcoming, inclusive and fair to everyone, and to be run/administered/managed in a way that is responsive to the needs of our members. The longer term aim is for the demographic profile of our members to more closely match that of our local community, something the growth of our junior section is helping to close the gap on.

In closing, thank you again to all our members who have given something to the club this year. 2023 sees the club's 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary and we look forward to celebrating this milestone anniversary with you all.

Vic Buck and Len Reilly  
October 2022