



LFR

Regular Committee Meeting

Co-Presidents: Geoff Hicks (GH) and Wojciech Panków (WP)

Club Secretary: Christos Bitzis-Politis (CBP)

Club Treasurer: Derwin Brennan (DB)

Membership Secretary: Gwen Wright (GW)

Races Secretaries: Eliot Rees (ER) and Tom Watson (TW)

Publicity & Communications Secretaries: Stephen Tomaszewski (ST) and Chris Swift (CS)

Social Secretaries: Nick Warner (NW) and Andrew Harrison (AH)

RCM Agenda

Tuesday 17th September 2024

Financial Updates (CT)

Early Withdrawals Inquiry Update & Decision

Races Update (RS)

Lyon EuroGames Updates

Publicity Updates (P&C S)

Ebulletin Volunteers Updates

Social Activities Update (SS)

2024 Christmas Dinner

Membership Update (MS)

Welcome Letter Draft

Club Secretary Updates

LFR Venues Updates

30th Anniversary Celebrations

Co-Presidents Updates

2025 International Trip, updates and 2025 IT sign-off

Club Policies Review

AOB

Chair: GH

Minutes: CBP

Apologies: WP, CS, TW

Thank you so very much for attending this meeting, just to remind you all that we are now in September and that there are six more Committee meetings left, so we are halfway through the club year and there are still few things that need to be done by the end of this term (GH)

Financial Updates (CT)

Early Withdrawals Inquiry Update & Decision

As you might have seen in the summary circulated in advance of this meeting, the Club's financial activity for the previous month, meaning for August 2024, is as follows: the Club's current Bank Balance is at £53,658.47, with £42,982.28 having gone towards paying various expenses of the International Trip. The total outgoings during the previous month have been £39,677.52, out of which £37,015.98 are the International Trip expenses and £810.20 have been paid towards the Clapham Sports Centre changing fees, as they finally got around charging us, as the Club haven't paid any fees to them since the Clapham run was launched. The total income of the Club in the previous month comes at £1,747.26, out of which £800 is the amount of the grant that CBP successfully won for coaching purposes from England Athletics. Overall, nothing unusual in terms of payments, compared to the previous year and also in the period immediately after the International Trip.

In regards to investing the LFR Reserves in various Savings Accounts, based on feedback received about the possibility of making more funds instantly available based on the notice periods in place, please find the below revised proposal for your consideration.

Account	Amount	Interest Rate	Interest after 1 Year
Lloyds Instant Access Saver	£23,000	1%	£230
Lloyds 32 Day Notice Saver	£15,000	2.5%	£375

Lloyds 95 Day Notice Saver	£10,000	3.81%	£381
Current Account	£5,658.47	0%	£0

This revised proposal would leave the Club with £28k instantly available to cover any contingencies, which is a reasonable balance to have. The interest after one year would be £986, which is not a huge amount of money but it is still something and as long as we are satisfied with the proposal and as long as the Club continues to adopt an investing policy, in my own opinion £28k is a very good backup.

It needs to be said that the money that the Club will earn from the interest in one year according to the above proposal by Derwin covers completely the amount of £500 that the Club is also giving to Filipe for his exceptional design of the new Club vest, so it is good to know that the Club is following a sustainable financial policy and it will be further beneficial to be able to continue on this track (GH)

The Committee fully agrees that it is preferable to follow a prudent administration with the Club finances and also unanimously approves the above proposal.

Do you by any chance happen to know if there have been any losses on profits from the International Trip?

I am not entirely sure as to the precise amount but again the IT subcommittee has managed to make some profit as I am under the impression that the IT reserves come at £12000k at the moment, so they must have made some kind profit, I'm very happy to check and come back to you at the next RCM.

Races Update (RS)

Lyon EuroGames Updates

We have some good news, excitingly, as of yesterday, we have managed to start getting the Power of 10 for the output of race results and starting from next week we will be able to return to having the race results on the ebulletin. Could we please put a little blurb on the ebulletin, in order to remind members to go to the end of the ebulletin and get their race results?

Action to be taken: ST is kindly request to please action the above request

Additional good news is that we have managed to come up with an alternative for the 10 Miler, as the previous one was clashing with one of the XC races, and we are going to have it on the next ebulletin. We are naturally very excited at the idea of including a 10 mile race in the 2024/25 Club Championships and it will be the first time to have a 10 miler. The event is called RunThrough and is scheduled to take place at the Lee Valley VeloPark on the Saturday 21st of December. We will also remind members that the number of core races required to score for the Club Champs will still remain the same as before, this is just a new addition to the list of Club races and we thought of introducing it because adding a different distance which not many people are racing, will offer Club members the possibility of experiencing something different, a different mileage. We also have seven different races for those who are only into road racing and not into XC.

Thank you so much to Tom and to you for your great efforts in finding a new race at a new date, I can only assume that it couldn't have been an easy task, considering also the date the event takes place.

There are numerous events that are taking place in the LFR calendar this year, it has become very difficult trying to arrange an event that does not clash with another Club race or another type of Club activity. The event has to take place before the end of March. January, February and March are already packed with events, so this event was the only one which was affordable and within a certain geographical area, thus also easy to reach. It is anticipated that the event might have too few people as it is in such a proximity to Christmas but at least those who are around will have the opportunity to experience something new.

Do we have any updates in regards to the London Marathon?

As mentioned during the last RCM, there are no updates on this for the time-being. This is one of the subjects that I have been monitoring with particular regularity and there has been no update relative to the allocation of Club Places, so based on the criteria which have been in place for the 2023 and 2024 events, I am expecting that the event organisers will keep the same criteria for the 2025 event as well, which means two guaranteed entries for LFR. So there is nothing to be done for the time being, besides being patient until around the middle

or the end of November when TCS London Marathon will email all affiliated clubs with their allocation of places (CBP)

I am just asking because we might need to remind members of the applications for the LM. The last time the revised scoring system was out was in the spring, so it might be useful to consider putting it out again, so that members are again reminded on time.

Action to be taken: ER and ST are kindly requested to please liaise in regards to actioning the above.

In regards to the next year's EuroGames I know that Tom has already started liaising with Matt Clare, who has lived in Lyon and who has offered to support the Club in making this an official LFR trip. Mitch Fryer has also come forward to support this initiative and there have already been some unofficial discussions among Club members on how to support and to organise this trip.

We also need to start updating the Club Championships documents before the XC season starts and I just wanted to pass this through the Committee's consideration, I was thinking that Club members who raced the 2024 BH as part of their Club Championships should be given 500 points, those who raced the Half Marathon in Budapest should also be allocated 500 points but these 500 points should not be given to Club members that raced the Budapest Half Marathon as part of a relay.

The Committee agrees that it is entirely reasonable not to allocate the same amount of points to members who raced 42km and to members who raced the above distance as part of a relay and together with others as part of a team, as it would be entirely unfair to do so; in order to avoid any misunderstandings, this subject might better be clarified in advance by a relative update and communication.

Action to be taken: ER is kindly requested to please action the above at his earliest convenience.

Publicity Updates (P&C S)

Ebulletin Volunteers Updates

There aren't any significant updates and I have been managing to get the ebulletin out so far. The situation has not been facilitated by the fact that this is a very busy period of the year, with lots of events going on and everyone of them deserving to be on a prominent position on the ebulletin, which also makes the relative blurb on seeking volunteers being relegated at the very end of the ebulletin. It might prove useful to put it out in the Club Circles

Action to be taken: CBP is kindly requested to please ask the Circle Volunteers to have this being repeated at the Club Circles

Discussion on the Circle Volunteers.

What is announced during the Club Circles very much depends on each CL discretion and there is no guarantee on whether an event will be promoted more than another. Some CL carry their phones to the Circle and read out one by one each ebulletin blurb, which also tends to annoy lots of the Club members, as this often takes longer than anticipated, let alone desired. The best thing would be to mention an event or a volunteering request and then point members to the ebulletin, for more information.

Lots has also been commented on the voice projection of Circle Leaders, as some really seem to be lacking the energy and the enthusiasm to deliver any of the Circle announcements in a way that comes across as engaging, with members either not paying any attention to the announcements or chatting to each other.

It is true that not everyone has or can have the professional projection of RG. The Club has not had any particular problems overall with welcoming new runners and making them feel included, if Circle Volunteers are doing and continue keep doing what they are supposed to be doing, that is being welcoming and proactive in buddying up new runners and making everyone feel included. Most Circle Volunteers are doing this and they are also very good at doing it, the issue is that this should be done by every single one.

It also needs to be mentioned that some extra assistance has very often if not always been very generously offered by Club members, who realise that two Circle Volunteers can often be an inadequate number compared to six new runners, for example, which proves also that the CL/CLA need some further support from established members, who know the route, and that most of the new runners need some kind of support on their first or second runs anyway,

regardless of whether they initially might have been thinking that they do or not. New runners more often than not have absolutely no idea of the route and they all tend to start very enthusiastically, and then at a certain point they find it very difficult to keep up the pace of the runners they have been following all along, so they stay behind and often get lost, if they are not been picked up by any of the LFR members who were following.

Although this is an important subject and very often some sort of training for Circle Volunteers could have proved very beneficial, at the moment we all need to think what are the best ways to sort the ebulletin issue out and when having a volunteer coming forward, whether it would seem much more attractive for them joining the Club Committee as a full member than just be a simple volunteer by doing the e-bulletin.

Frankly that very much depends on the person that will come forward to volunteer for the role. Some members feel that being part of the Committee is complicated and they do not want to be part of it, as in their head they have a completely erroneous and distorted idea of what the Club Committee does, thinking that it is all about club politics and machinations, whereas some others fear the commitment of time, which is totally understandable, because there is undoubtedly a certain commitment of time involved when one is a Committee member. I do see the point of engaging and inspiring members much more by making them officially part of the Committee but it frankly depends on their own commitment of time and on how much effort they are willing to offer to the Club through the role. Naturally, and this was discussed also during our last Committee meeting, when dealing with members' contact details and personal data, it is always preferable to have Committee members on board when dealing with these, for reasons of security and trust.

Again, as it has been previously discussed, we may need to consider having a tiered system on the subscription on MailChimp, which will not allow the same level of access to every ebulletin volunteer.

I am wondering whether it might prove useful to approach some of our newest or relatively new members and ask them whether they would like to get involved, as they might lack the prejudices of established members in regards to becoming part of the Committee.

In all honesty, and compared to other Committee roles, this has not been the easiest Committee position to sell.

I think making some extra efforts towards advertising the role further could prove beneficial, and if one of the volunteers that comes forward feels much more inclined to become part of the Committee, then so be it, it is perfectly reasonable at this point to ask CS to resign from his position, as we need to call a spade a spade. This has nothing to do with CS, as regardless of him moving away, Chris has always been very keen to help out, he even started putting the last ebulletin together although he is Boston, which is something that needs to be acknowledged and cherished, but in the long term, he may have to step down and we all have to be realistic about this.

It is obvious that we all need to redouble our efforts in finding some other Club members who are willing to volunteer and also we need to be prepared to pay for the Mail Chimp subscription increase, as to be able to afford having varied and tiered permissions going down the road, so that not every volunteer will have access to members' data.

It was discussed during the last RCM that also the rest of our social media needs some further encouragement, and in particular the LFR Instagram account. One of us needs to get in touch with Cameron and check whether he wouldn't mind having someone else getting involved in the process, as Cam has been doing a fantastic job for sometime now and he may feel tired or in need of some support, or he even might want to drop out completely, as he has been a volunteer for this role for three years in a row now.

Cameron has already been contacted in the meantime and he mentioned that he is very happy for someone else to take the Instagram account under their care, as well as being very eager to share the task, if a new volunteer comes forward and does not want to be just on their own. But the point is that he would be very happy if someone else were to come forward in support of the role in a leading position, which will allow him to support in a secondary role, when and if needed.

This should not be taken as a critique, it is nothing but a comment and as such it should not reflect negatively upon the efforts nor the dedication of Cameron but there have lately been lots of comments from members that every other athletics club in London has a very active

instagram presence, whereas LFR does not. So having more people on board could prove beneficial.

On the other hand, it is always much simpler making a comment on the state of things than having members coming forward and stepping up to support the LFR Instagram account themselves, so hopefully this motion will bring some fruit and some volunteers will come forward.

I believe this is the time to have a revamp of the account, especially as there is a new logo, so we might want to build upon the new Club logo and launch an enthusiastic revival of the platform.

Discussion on WhatsApp Community Groups

The Greenwich Wednesday run already has a group; we could add the Tuesday track and the Thursday track and the Women & NB Whatsapp chat, all of them under the same WhatsApp Communities umbrella.

The same might not apply to the Theatre Group, as some of the people participating are not registered Club members.

It might be an idea to start paving the way by approaching the administrators of all the smaller Whatsapp groups and then we ought to contact those participating in each individual group and ask them whether in principle they wouldn't be resistant to be part of the LFR Community.

The majority of these WhatsApp groups are very much overlapping anyway, between the Circles Emergency, the Committee, the East London Long Runs, the Central & East London Long Runs and the Coaching.

Social Activities Update (SS)

2024 Christmas Dinner

The communications with the Thistle have had some fruit and we are very confident that this is going to be a very successful event. First of all, there are going to be 120 places for the seated dinner. The price for each spot is £63 per head, bearing in mind that a special LFR discount has already been negotiated and applied, as the original price was supposed to be £87 per person. I was wondering whether the Committee would be open to the suggestion of a subsidy of £13 so as to bring the actual amount to £50 per person. The amount to be given

out for this subsidy would come at £1560 and we feel that this subsidy will be very welcome and much more inclusive.

We still need to sort out the deposit, as there is a 10% deposit to secure the date and the venue. The total expenditure for the event comes at £9560 so the deposit is £956 and it needs to be paid in advance. Then there is a £1500 minimum bar spent, which is not a problem, as the amount is very feasible to reach and there will also be 50 drinks tickets at £10 per person. This last part shouldn't have been included in the package by The Thistle, because it is for LFR to be selling out drinks-only tickets, as a way of subsidising the event, so this is something that still needs to be further clarified and sorted out. Please be aware that the date has been set as Saturday the 30th of November. (NW)

Last year the Club used OutSavvy for the purchase of the tickets, in order to make it even more economical for members, it might be best if this year the purchase of tickets for the seated part of the event is done through bank transfer or GoCardless, without having to pay any transaction fee.

Discussion on the type of entertainment to have for the event and the suggestion of having NS deliver a cabaret act. NS, who delivered the singing workshop last year, holds a very successful weekly cabaret show at the Rose & Crown, and has come forward wishing to support the Christmas party by presenting something different, a cabaret act.

I have seen NS at the Rose & Crown and he is really excellent at his act.

NS is an incredibly talented musician and it would be a very different type of entertainment and a very welcome introduction to the Christmas party having a cabaret number at the event, as I feel that it is also more suitable to the venue that is hosting LFR this year.

The expenses for the entertainment would be £100 for the cabaret act and £300 for the dj. We have not discussed the DJ yet, as Andrew and I will be assigned a person who will help us go through all the details. We think this is a really good deal and hosting the event at The Thistle is coming at around 2k this year. It will be £1560 for the subsidy, £300 for the DJ and £100 for the cabaret act, which is so much cheaper than last year.

Voting procedure

The Committee unanimously approves the expense of 100£ for the Cabaret act.

The Committee votes unanimously and in favour of the suggestion to reduce the suggested price of £63 further down by subsidising the amount of £13 for each attendee, this being £1560 in total.

There will definitely be some comments from members that the Committee is again using Club funds and is spending £1560 to subsidise an event.

This is a festive event that takes place once a year, it is open to every Club member and every Club member is free to attend. The seated part of the event, with the meal, is open to just 120 members due to a cap in numbers for H&S reasons, and we all have to be realistic, it will never be possible to hold a seated dinner for 500 people with our budget, and members need to understand that. Also holding an event for more than 120 people needs the human resources and the infrastructure which LFR does not have. It takes a subcommittee of six or seven incredibly competent and committed people to organise the international Trip for 136 members over a period of six months; the Christmas party will have to be organised by two people within the space of just two months, thus it becomes important for all members to have realistic expectations. On the other hand, as mentioned the Christmas event is open to all Club members and thus by applying this subsidy it becomes even more inclusive for everyone.

At the end of the day, the Club Committee has been voted to make most decisions on behalf of membership, and it is not feasible to ask every member's opinion on every decision that needs to be taken. Some decisions may prove unpopular but I am confident that they are entirely justifiable, as the Committee takes into consideration the Club as a whole. In addition, the Club has the privilege to be able to subsidise a good number of very diverse events, the Club is subsidising the LFR women-only trip in October, we have subsidised coaching for our triathlon coaches, we are subsidising in full our coaching programme, so this Christmas dinner subsidy is just one more subsidy among the many others approved and authorised by the Committee.

Discussion on hosting a post-party event at the City of Quebec, as the venue closes at 3am on a Saturday evening.

Discussion on the LFR Social Walk

The last Walk was beautiful but numbers of attendance have dwindled down, as it was just four people so I think that I might take a little pause. Also, I might reconsider the way it is being advertised, and on whether we should continue to advertise it as a walk or just as a coffee outing. When we advertise it as a walk, especially within the context of a running club, those attending might have in mind a long walk, as fit people want to have a good long walk, whereas, although the physical aspect in keeping everyone active is also very important, this is much more of a social initiative. In consequence, I am thinking of potentially advertising the next one more of as a coffee and a walk than as a walk and a coffee (AH)

This is entirely up to you and please remember that you have the Committee's support in any decision that you will be taking in regards to the Walk. You might want to take a short break and then give it another go, as the weekend the last Walk took place was an odd weekend with many events taking place all condensed over a relatively short period of time (GH)

I am going to think about it but taking a short break for a month might improve numbers of attendance. I was also thinking of having the Walk mostly advertised on Instagram, as the main intention is to reach new people, and this will never be achieved by having it on the ebulletin, and thus also make non-LFR members realise that the Walk is free and fun, and instagram would be a really good platform to use for that.

The post Big Half event at the Sail Loft was extremely successful and the event manager of the venue promised to give LFR a bigger space for next year. It was overall a very lovely event and we very much enjoyed having the BHFR joining us, they are an absolutely lovely bunch, so many thanks to CBP for facilitating this and arranging for the BHFR to join us.

Action to be taken: NW is kindly requested to please liaise with the CT in regards to paying the £956 advance deposit to The Thistle for the Christmas Party.

Suggestion of organising a quiz with the QueerzNight, as they organise a modern LGBTQ+ pub quiz with a twist in many locations around London and they happen to have events regularly taking place in Clapham and Vauxhall and one such event could be organised and suggested to the crowd that regularly goes to The Two Brewers on a Thursday evening. I have noticed that engaging with them raises the instagram publicity of all those clubs that are

doing the QueerzNight events and we could mingle with another LGBTQ+ sports club, which would be fun, while at the same time boosting our visibility. (ER)

Action to be taken: ER is kindly requested to please liaise with the person responsible for the event as per above and then report to the Committee at the next RCM

The respective Pride Social and Big Half deposits of money from Comptons and the Sail Loft have been duly refunded to LFR.

Membership Update (MS)

You will be pleased to know that the Club currently has 641 registered members as of today.

There has been a thorough WebCollect clean-up operation and finally, all those who have not rejoined, who had asked for a period of grace and/or were indecisive and procrastinating, have been deleted from the platform. Each and everyone of them received at least one, in most cases two reminders from me, as there are always a few strugglers, which we don't want to make anyone feel bad and unwanted but such a clearing operation is obviously necessary, as a. We can't have non registered members on the platform, already six months into the club year and b. WebCollect has a different admin fee if the Club reaches or goes over 700 members, and we should be paying this fee in due course and by having registered members on the platform, not because of people who are undecided on whether to renew their membership or not six months on.

Due to the combination of workload and limited time, there are still several new members that have not been registered with EA but if they reach out to you, please let them know that their registration will be done within the next two weeks, there is currently a bit of a backlog but I am trying to go through as many of them as possible on most of my Sundays.

Thank you so much for your feedback on the Welcome Letter draft for the new members, and thank you Geoff for answering my query about any general enquiries, which I now know that needs to be directed to the info email account. And also your point on including something relative to the LFR Women only and NB WhatsApp group to new female members.

My one and only suggestion, if I may, would be to please include a mention on the triathlon section, as it is not always obvious that LFR is a running and a triathlon club, and also as we have been trying to boost our triathlon section in the last years, it would be excellent to let all new members know about its existence and if new members happen to be interested in

triathlon, then they may want to consider sending a FB request to the LFR Triathlon FB page. (CBP)

Club Secretary

LFR Venues Updates

As you all know Geoff, Wojciech and I met and discussed the general situation about the Thistle, as we understand how important it is for the cohesion of our Saturday runners, both long and regular ones, and that we definitely need a bit more time to try and come up with some alternative options. I have been looking at hotels around the area but I need to inform you that the situation does not look very promising. Thus I wrote to The Thistle asking for a short extension of the deadline, as at this point we could use some more time to check what are the results from the Consultation. It is very unfortunate from our point of view that there won't be any of the Saturday runs this coming Saturday due to the Pride Run, so it becomes imperative to have a bit more time to gauge members' opinions on this subject. First of all, as mentioned, I wrote to The Thistle asking for a small extension of time, and they were incredibly understanding of the situation. I am going to read their answer to you, as follows: "Thank you for your thoughtful update regarding the brunch price increase. We understand that this is a matter requiring careful consideration, especially when it involves the opinions of your runners. Given the long and valued collaboration we've shared, we completely understand the need to extend the decision-making process. We are happy to wait until the 5th of October for your final decision. Please feel free to reach out if there's anything else we can assist with in the meantime". I think it is very important to continue for one more week with the Consultation and to encourage more members to participate, as this is the best way forward. The increase from £12 to £17 is not a negligible increase, I do not feel taking a decision on behalf of others without first knowing the opinion of the people who will be directly impacted by this increase. It is also important to empower members and to further involve them in such cases, making them feel considered and engaged and also for reasons of collective accountability and responsibility in making a decision. At the end of the day, it will be the Consultation results who will be making the final decision and not just the Committee, and this seems much more fair.

It could be that the great majority of our Saturday runners finds the increase to £17 quite logical up to a certain point and under the circumstances, and they are willing to pay the price of £17, so this might facilitate your task even more.

Some members have also mentioned and asked whether The Thistle would be willing to hold a Coffee & Pastry option only.

I am more than happy to ask about this and come back to the Committee, as one more question to ask will offer me the opportunity to continue the communication with The Thistle on this subject. Our negotiations at this point very much depend on saying the right thing at the right moment, as timing is always of essence. I do not believe that they will accept having a Coffee & Pastry option only, as the whole discussion is based on the provision of a brunch buffet, but as said, asking won't hurt anyone. And of course I will continue the negotiations with The Thistle but I am unable to make any promises at this point.

Action to be taken: CBP is kindly requested to please post the Thistle Consultation on the LFR FB and encourage members to participate.

There are 64 responses to the Consultation at the moment, with 12 members not prepared to pay the increase, 29 prepared to pay but would have rather preferred a more economical option and 23 members prepared to pay. Some of the comments are very supportive and helpful, whereas some others are more or less irrelevant, with members offering an opinion, but not an opinion strictly pertinent to the survey.

I am not prepared to pay every Saturday £17 for brunch at The Thistle.

Yes, we understand this, this has been made very clear to us all by you and by now but if there is no other option, I don't really see what we could do; we may all have to be prepared for the possibility that we will have to go with this suggested increase. Christos, Wojciech and I have discussed and we have agreed that it would not be a positive thing for the Club to divide the Saturday regular runners from the long runners, in trying to find two separate venues for each group. First of all, one of our important selling points, and probably the only one, in having our group for brunch is that we are able to provide a large number of runners on a Saturday morning, as a financial incentive, which may also help us to get a better deal. If

we divide the two runs, then each group will be able to provide even less numbers for a separate brunch in two different venues. In addition, members look forward to seeing their friends after each of the runs, this mixing of the two runs is a wonderful opportunity for members to get together and to socialise, the Saturday run has a wonderful and very welcoming atmosphere, it is in the Club's interest to be able to maintain this.

Coming now to The Three Stags, the feedback has been all around very positive. The new management has been very prompt in their responses and the ordering system is much better now, a definite improvement, as they use calling out names now which makes it easier for our runners to point their members of staff towards the right direction when the food arrives rather than the very annoying number system the venue employed before. In addition, the food seems to be good, there might be less choice compared to the previous management but the portions are bigger and the food is of better quality.

Some members mentioned that they'd be keen to return to the Mercato Metropolitano in the summer months and use The Three Stags as a homely and warming winter & spring venue, and I have no objection at all to that. I am very glad that LFR is back TTS, that the £12 reduced menu is still an option for LFR and also of the recent improvements, keeping The Three Stags for the winter months and the Mercato Metropolitano for summer in my opinion might even work better for the venue as well, as they seem to have more clients during the summer.

30th Anniversary Celebrations

Following the request from RD, I have done my very best in negotiating a different date and the LFR visit to the London Metropolitan Archives has now been postponed to Saturday the 14th of June, as part of the 30th Anniversary Celebrations and also of the 2025 Pride celebrations, two pigeons with one stone.

In order to have the 30th Anniversary Celebrations Launching Event taking place in February 2025, which is the birthday month of LFR, the best dates to host the above are Saturday the 1st of February, Tuesday the 11th of February and Saturday the 22nd of February. The London XC Race takes place in Parliament Hill Fields on Saturday the 22nd but this should not affect more than 20 Club members and also this would affect members that wish to race on that day rather marginally, as one can attend both events with some effort and some good beforehand planning. Holding an event on Saturday the 15th of February is not ideal, because

people will be still celebrating St Valentine's Day, which means busier venues, increased prices and poor services, and there may also be an LFR delegation travelling to Paris on that weekend for the event the Paris FR are organising every year, the Saint Valentin race. Thus, the best dates to hold our launching event are the three aforementioned.

My suggestion would be to organise a smart drinks event on a really tall building of London that offers some spectacular views over the city, thus celebrating London, the city of London Frontrunners, from above. As mentioned February is the LFR Birthday Month, as the first LFR run took place on Saturday the 11th of February 1995 and it is already a month away from the New Year festivities, many LFR members have a dry January, so an event in early February is a good date to launch a year of festivities. The initial task would be to check for venues such as the Sky Garden, or The Garden at 120, and choose the one which we think will work best for hosting a smart but unpretentious LFR drinks event, from 5 to 8pm or from 6pm to 9pm, then make a reservation and post on the ebulletin a short "Save The Date" blurb. This will be just a drinks event, with the opportunity for members to independently go for dinner afterwards, meaning there won't be any music or any show provided by LFR. My main concern is that the event needs to be as inclusive as possible, meaning drinks should not cost an arm and a leg.

Action to be taken: CBP is kindly requested to please create a 30th Anniversary ebulletin blurb, requesting for members to come forward as volunteers

Enquiry from ER on whether the Club is planning on hosting the usual Two Brewers pizza party at the venue's back room.

One event should not exclude the other, everybody loves TTB pizza party. For two years it has been one of our most popular and successful events and I think either the 15th or the 22nd of February might be perfect dates for hosting it.

Action to be taken: the SS are kindly requested to please place a relative enquiry at TTB and book a date for the LFR pizza party at the back room of the venue.

Have received a very informative and encouraging message from Alex Carington in regards to the Gay Games that in 2026 will be held in Valencia. Alex mentioned that although this is a long time away, he nevertheless wanted to flag the event out and inform us that he will be

encouraging triathlon attendance to the event; in addition Alex would like to know whether the Committee might consider encouraging an official Club trip to Valencia or maybe even have the 2026 International Trip coincide to the 2026 Gay Games. Alex came forward and was very kind to share this information in advance appreciating that such trips always take some time to organise and so he thought it might be good to at least get the wheels in motion to consider it in a leisurely fashion.

I don't see any objection in making the suggestion of the above option to the IT subcommittee, though given the time of the year, and the event itself, which usually attracts a lot of athletes from all over the world, finding cheap accommodation for a large number of attendees might be an issue.

The event is spread out during a whole week, from the 27th of June to the 4th of July '26, the triathlon and the different running events might be scheduled to take place on different days, so we might not be able to make running and triathlon coincide.

Perhaps it might be a good idea to follow Alex's suggestion and to flag it up now to the IT subcommittee, as planning for such an event does take time and although they might be already planning something else for 2026, we shouldn't let this suggestion be in the meantime lost. Having just said that, some of us might not be part of the decision-making process for that trip in 2026 and very possibly many of the current IT subcommittee members won't be part of it either.

Co-Presidents

Update from 2024 International Trip

The IT subcommittee is very pleased to report a successful 2024 international trip to Budapest. There has been a record attendance of 136 Frontrunners and feedback from the trip remains strong, with 100% of the participants giving the trip a 4/5 or 5/5 vote for value for money, 97% for the social events and 91% for the atmosphere. The trip made a surplus of £1,200 which will be kept in reserve. This continues the IT subcommittee's prudent approach to the finances for the trip, with a 10% contingency and tight budget controls.

LFR made a wonderful and very strong appearance at the Budapest Night Run. Marius Thies finished 3rd in the men's Half Marathon, Rachel Wickham and Erika Kulikova finished 3rd in the women's Half Marathon Relay and Kai Konkolewski and Guy Blacklee finished 3rd in

the men's Half Marathon Relay. London Frontrunners teams made up 10 of the top 15 teams in the delay, so it was a very successful trip from a racing point of view as well.

Specific actions from the feedback received from participants will be reported back to the Club in due course and this will include group entry (rather than individual entry) being a base requirement for the race we select; and a greater programme of daytime activities. The IT subcommittee wishes to open the sub-committee membership to an additional member, with priority given to a female or non-binary member.

2025 International Trip Proposal

The IT subcommittee would like to propose the Elche Half Marathon as the destination for the 2025 international trip, on the weekend of 21-24 March 2025. This race has been selected for a number of reasons:

It is an interesting race, the oldest half marathon in the world, going through the streets of a historic city with a UNESCO world heritage site. As a requirement of the trip, there are a 10k and a half marathon option..

Flight options and transfers are plentiful, making it easy for people to attend. Friday evening flights are available, which we hope will make it inclusive for those who are unable to take leave (e.g. teachers).

Spain is one of the best countries in the world for LGBTQIA+ rights, with strong trans rights and equal marriage.

Our surveys of attendees have consistently prioritised somewhere sunny and in a city.

It is within our intention to keep prices low and this is an affordable region with plentiful restaurants and hotels.

The IT will be hosted on the Costa Blanca, in a large town or city with further information provided in due course. The price is intended to be £390 for the 3 night package with 136 spots, 30 of which have female and non-binary priority. Tickets are proposed to be launched to all members via a special e-bulletin in early October. We will request this of the Communications Secretary once we have a quote for a hotel and can confirm the price.

2025 International Trip sign-off

Will there be an instalment plan as there has been one in previous IT? I am asking this as this IT is very close to the last IT, the last one was in September, this one is in March, so there

might not be enough time for members to set money aside and an instalment plan could prove very practical and helpful.

I also think that having an instalment plan would be a very welcome addition and it would be excellent if we could have the confirmation of this already at the IT launch on the ebulletin in October.

Setting up instalments is a function which is quite simple to set up and we can do it though GoCardless, it has been done historically so I don't really see any reason on why it shouldn't be included at the forthcoming trip. If the IT subcommittee would agree to that, it would be great.

The price to participate at the IT is getting steeper and steeper, it was £360 for Budapest and now it is £390 for Elche, each time it becomes financially more difficult to participate.

I hear what you are saying but the location is not supposed to be that expensive, it is probably one of the cheaper options for an IT so early in the year.

Why is there a change to have the IT in spring? Is there a preference for this season?

I am not part of the IT subcommittee and I do not have a precise answer to that but I believe it is done for reasons of practicality, as there are simply more races taking place in springtime than in the autumn, which facilitates the task of finding an event that fills all the parameters which are in place so as to make this a safe destination. In addition, besides the LM in April and the GBR in May, the Club does not hold any other events, which makes it simpler, as the dates for both the above usually come out very early in the year, so it becomes simpler to plan this ahead.

Voting

The Committee votes unanimously in favour of accepting and confirming the IT subcommittee's proposal on both the 2025 IT destination and date.

Action to be taken: GH is kindly requested to please inform the IT sc of the above, in addition to asking some clarifications on behalf of the Committee on a. the increase in the

general costs of the IT, b. the possibility of including a 3-instalment payment plan as a standard offering, c. the possibility of including a 2-nights option along the 3-nights option, d. whether there is a particular reason for holding the event in Spring and not in Autumn as per usual and e. the query from AC on the 2026 IT and whether it may coincide with the Valencia Gay Games in July 2026, as there are about 15 months in between the 2025 Elche IT and the 2026 Valencia GayGames.

There has been no update from the DISCo so far, I have contacted Paul but as far as I can tell there has not been any progress on their side at all. They still need to hold a second meeting and we are six months into the Club year.

Stephen Turnock brought forward a very promising initiative, the one of volunteering for Transcend, the Queer Running Club race, and also Tom Holmes the initiative of volunteering for Trans Pride. Both were embraced and encouraged by the Committee immediately and were duly advertised on the ebulletin. The feedback on Transcend was not what I would call positive on the organisational aspect of the event but we all need to be more understanding as it was their first event and I am sure it must have been the exact same organisational chaos at the Pride Run 20 years ago; such events improve only with time so I think that the Club should continue to support the event and give it another chance. Paul G and Sarah F. represented the Club at the 2024 LGBTQ+ Sports Fair, again this was very positively received and supported by the Committee and judging from the photograph that was taken I think that both enjoyed their role on that evening (CBP)

I know, these were lovely initiatives but there hasn't been any strategy nor any long term plan to follow, and frankly if there isn't going to come out of a team of eight people something concrete that we may support and follow all together as a club, then there is no point in having such a subcommittee around. We might as well dissolve it, rethink our approach and start anew.

Club Policies Review

This is something that Christos brought to our attention, that the Club Policies and Procedures need to be reviewed and updated. This is not a task for just one Committee member as there are several documents involved and the best thing would be to make a list of all of the Club procedures and then each one of us, or also in couples, as we are now ten, take

upon us the responsibility to read through and update the Club policy we have chosen to review.

Some of these Policies are more pertinent to certain roles than others, so the whole task will become simpler and it would obviously make much more sense to have, for example, the Social Media Policy being reviewed by the P&C Secretary. I believe that reviewing these policies is to the benefit of everyone one, in order to be better protected as Committee and also to better protect all Club members, in addition to making sure than the language that we are using feels inclusive, as some of these policies may have not been updated over the past four years and they may need to reflect any current updates (CBP)

Action to be taken: CBP is kindly requested to please action the above review by making a list of all the documents and Club Policies and present it to the Committee for further sharing of the responsibility of having each of the documents concerned reviewed.

Discussion on the Club becoming a Limited Company

As the subject of security has been flagged up and reviewing the Club policies is an issue of high priority, I would like to discuss with you all the possibility of registering LFR as a Limited Company. The Club has currently the status of an unincorporated association which means that we all, all Committee members, we are personally liable for the Club and its financial situation and the main benefit of registering the Club as a LC means that, besides changing its status, the Committee is not anymore liable for any financial disasters in case a CT decides to defraud the Club of its reserves or if a Club member tried to sue the Club for a significant amount of money. Besides exercising a very thorough monitoring of the Club's financial circumstances, becoming a Limited Company would be another way of addressing both the above. Naturally this change of status will have some implications for the Club but it will also limit the liability for all of us and for our successors. The two most significant changes as a result of this change of status would be that the Club would have to pay an annual fee to the Companies House and that we will have to have our final accounts being sent to them for review once a year.

Naturally this is not a suggestion that can happen instantly, because simply it cannot. There is a process to be followed in order to register LFR with the Companies House and in addition this can't move forward without the endorsement and approval of an AGM, where this suggestion will have to be voted.

From my own experience, the Club will have to be formally dissolved, we would have to formally dissolve the Club Constitution and then reform the Club anew as a company, so this can only be done with the approval of an AGM, at the end of the financial year.

There is a specific section on the Club Constitution relative to the dissolution of the Club, everything we need to know on that is contained on Articles 67 and 68, according to which the Club shall be dissolved if a resolution to dissolve the Club is passed with a two-thirds majority vote at the AGM and if this is to occur, then all Club assets, such as the Club reserves, will have to be distributed equally and returned to those who are full Club members at the time of the dissolution. So, this is obviously not a simple thing to bring forward as it needs lots of planning in advance, and Club members need to be notified at least two to three months beforehand and prior to the date of the vote for dissolution. So I feel that there is lots of homework still to be done before moving forward.

If the club were to be dissolved, we might need to start by changing and rephrasing these two articles first, as this whole procedure is not free of bureaucracy, but ultimately the Club will be protected in a better way, we will minimise the potential of a financial bankruptcy and we will also deliver the Club and its reserves safer to our successors.

It is a big step and we definitely need the time to think about it. In addition, we might need to seek legal advice before taking any steps further and before bringing the subject to the attention of members.

Does changing the Club status means that we may have to change the type of bank account we have been using?

I do not think so, we are using a business-type bank account and the same will be used also in case the Club becomes a LC.

Again from my professional experience, most sports clubs I happen to know about are unincorporated associations. This seems like a lengthy and complicated procedure to go through, there surely must be another method of protecting us and the Club without the need to switch to a Limited Company (GW)

I would also agree that it is a big change, it completely changes the nature of all relationships within the Club, it changes the type of relationship between Club members and the Committee and also the type of relationship between the members themselves.

Tim Charters and Andrew Corti were not very keen on following this option and neither of them wanted to take the Club down this path.

There are anyway two constraints relative to this suggestion, that members might not want to follow the proposal and thus vote the whole thing down at the AGM, and also the fact that becoming a LC affects very much whom we are allowed to fundraise for and what type of fundraiser campaigns we are allowed to have. Everything will have to become much more regulated.

We can go down the Company path if we do not want to go down the charity path, or we could also do both, as the procedure is up to a point identical and if the Club decides to go through this and do all the paperwork, we might as well go a bit further and become a charity, as there would be some benefits, if LFR decides to become a charity.

If LFR becomes a charitable organisation, it would then become much simpler for members and other organisations to make donations to the Club.

How much will the whole procedure cost?

The actual procedure does not require a substantial amount of money and then there is the annual fee that we need to keep paying, I am not able to tell you at this moment and at the top of my head the precise amount but I can remember that when I read about it, it didn't seem that much. Though any legal advice that we may have to seek in support of this proposal and in addition to clarify certain issues, will definitely come at a rate.

It would be really good if we could find some other people who have gone through the same procedure and which could potentially advise us on what exactly needs to be done and what needs to be filled in in terms of paperwork, preferably people from other sports clubs just like ours, and also we all need to have a much more clear idea on what are the potential benefits of going down this path before moving forward.

I just think that it is too much hassle with very limited benefits in the short and long term.

Getting some advice on the subject would be money reasonably spent.

If we were to go down the road to become a limited company, it would also be good to become a charity,

I happen to have some reservations on this, as we are an LGBTQ+ sports club, and as there are a lot of issues and campaigning for LGBTQ+ sports nowadays, this could be thought of as political.

I happen to be much more concerned about the personal liability aspect of the subject and not so much about whether LFR should become a charity or not, as what we need at the moment is to focus on how to become better protected while at the same time protecting and benefiting the Club.

We don't need to make a decision right now and no Committee member is expected to, either. We have six months in front of us to be better prepared and also to prepare the ground, and I believe that if we decide favourable on becoming a LC, we can make it happen before the AGM, we have the time to make it happen.

There is no specific action for Committee members at the moment but the Committee wishes to know more on the subject, in order to be able to form a more informed opinion, before making any kind of proposal to members.

Action to be taken: Coordinate a meeting between Andrew Corti, Tim Charters, GR and GH

AOB

Wonderful news to share on the forthcoming Pride Run, with 951 runners having already registered for the event, 200 more registrations since last year, and the registrations are currently closed.

Action to be taken: CBP is kindly requested to please send out the Doodle Poll for the next RCM, starting from the week Monday 14th of October.

