



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 Secretary: Tom Watson (TW)
Publicity & Communications Secretary: Craig Munn (CM)
Social Secretary: Mark Randall (MR)
Operations Secretary: Joe Finch (JF)
Triathlon Secretary: Ben Humphrys (BH)

LFR
Monday 14th April 2025
RCM Agenda

Welcome introduction (GH)

Financial Updates (CT)

Races Update (RS)

Club Championships 2025/26

- Club Champs races portfolio, presentation & confirmation
- Scoring methodology, presentation & confirmation
- Awards Ceremony, date & location

Euro Games Update

Gay games planning

Publicity Updates (P&C O)

Social Activities Update (SS)

Post London Marathon Social updates

Membership Update (MS)

Co-Presidents

DEI and relevant discussions

AOB

Chair: GH

Minutes: CBP

Apologies: MR

Welcome introduction (GH)

I will try to be brief as there is a fair amount of business to go through for this meeting and I wouldn't like this to become a very long meeting

As a general note I would like to share with all of you the kind reminder that the Committee Whatsapp chat is to be used for alerting the rest of the Committee members for noticing important emails which have already been shared among our team and also for notifying the Committee for any pressing points.

And a general point for newly-elected and Committee members from the previous year, we wish you to warmly enjoy your time on the Committee, reminding you that we are a very supportive group, and if you happen to run into any challenges with your role, then please do not hesitate to tell us, or if you feel that there are moments when you are taking more than you can cope with, again please let us know (GH)

Self- introduction of Committee members and established order of reports

Financial Updates (CT)

The total outgoings during the previous month come to £13,404.62 whereas the total Club income in previous month has been £9538.41. The most significant of our outgoings has been refunding £2766.17 to Chris Samsa for certain International Trip expenses and again refunding £7690.06 to Michael Rutherford for some further International Trip expenses. Both these expenses were presented to and approved by the Committee.

In general I would say that the Club is in a fairly good financial position, and the greatest source of income has come through an influx of membership registrations, including a large number of members that joined in March as well.

The third last payment which has been processed was paying for some expenses of the 2025 Green Belt Relay, to which the Club is sending five teams this year, and we are all very excited.

Discussion on the signing off of the Club accounts from the last club year and additional discussions on finalising the budget for this year.

Action to be taken: The CT is kindly requested to please circulate among Committee members the provisional Club accounts & budget.

Discussions on the potential of employing a professional either within the Club or outside of the Club to look at the Club's finances at the end of each year.

With the Club becoming larger each year, the financial aspect is gradually but steadily becoming significantly larger in numbers and also slightly more complicated, in terms of resources and capacity.

How many Committee members need to approve the authorisation of large Club-related payments?

All amounts that exceed the limit of £500 need the authorisation of two Committee members, with one of them being a Co-President and a different Committee member

Action to be taken: The CT is kindly requested to please check and report back to the Committee the precise number of how many Committee members are needed to sign off large amounts of Club funds

Races Update (RS)

Club Championships 2025/26

As you may remember, those of you that were on the Committee over the past year, Eliot and I wanted to revise the scoring and offer the Club some very precise scoring guidelines, as there were certain aspects of the Club Championships that could be have been considered a bit open to interpretation and we wanted to do it as water-tight as possible. For a number of reasons this didn't happen over the last club year, mainly because we couldn't revise the scoring system while the Club Championships were on, but it is ready now.

The scoring system has been re-structured, and it is currently designed to be even more fair, to encourage participation further and across different types of races, and most importantly, something new in offering some flexibility in terms of events, so that more members can get involved and remain competitive throughout the season.

Just to clarify what I mean by flexibility. The road races which form the Club Championship's portfolio are scheduled to take place on specific dates and by not being able to attend these races, due to various engagements, members not only missed out on the events but were becoming demotivated as missing just one event was enough to ruin their experience of participation and bring their scoring points down. Now for every single road race that is taking place during the Club Championships, there will be an alternative road race of equal distance on a different date, a sister race which will offer Club members a second chance and thus much more flexibility. I am basically doubling the number of road races though members will get participation points for one of these races, not for both, although they can do both if they wish to.

-Are we comfortable that there is a sufficient number of races at an affordable rate that can be offered to Club members as an alternative, as all the events on the current Club Championships portfolio are either subsidized or come at a reduced rate. Would this alternative race mean that members would have to pay for themselves?

-This is something that I will have to look into closer and do some further research but I believe yes. Most members will obviously try to race the main event, the sister race just offers membership the possibility.

The Cross Country fixtures are very much part of the Club Championships, as they are 50% of the events and members still have to do the XC and for the moment there are no alternative races on offer for the habitual XC fixtures.

Discussion on the XC Fixtures

Members are very much divided, either they would absolutely adore the XC and become staunch supporters, or due to being scarred by an earlier experience during their younger years at school, they will vehemently refuse to take part.

Discussion on whether there would be the possibility of reducing the number of XC fixtures relative to the Club Championships and whether there could become a pertinent but slightly separate section, as there are anyway two XC awards which have nothing to do with the Club Championships.

There would never be a question of removing the XC fixtures completely out of the Club Championships, just of reducing it.

Scoring methodology, presentation & confirmation

Discussion on the Club Championships Scoring System, as there seems to be a Committee consensus that it does need some thorough explanation and how it is presented to members in a way that it does not create any confusion.

There are four main award categories: Senior men, Veteran Men, Senior Women and Veteran Women, where veterans are intended those above the age of forty.

Members score points across 13 distinct events that are covering various distances and terrains. There are six road races, 1 mile, 5km, 5 miles, 10km, 10 miles, and a half marathon, then there are six Cross Country races, which are the 5 Met League XC fixtures, plus the London XC championships at Parliament Hill Fields. Last, there is the marathon category, whose scoring is based on your best marathon time during the club year. All these races can count towards your final score and members score points based on their performance and on their participation across the above 13 races.

In regards to the 5 Met League XC fixtures and the London Parliament Hill Fields Championships, members can get both position and participation points. The position points are earned based on one's finishing place in that race. The member that finishes in 1st place gets 500 points, the one that comes 2nd gets 499 points, the 3rd gets 498 points, and so on. For the six events above there are also participation points, which are 10 points just for showing up at the event and finishing the race. Of all the six above-mentioned events, the maximum number of XC races that can count towards your final scoring is just three of them, either three of the Met League fixtures, or two Met League fixtures and the London Championships.

The same scoring system of position and participation points applies to the six road distance races. Participation points are again 10 points per race and this does not really influence one's major performance points.

Discussion on clarity of the scoring system, on its fairness and also as an incentive to increase the number of participants, as there are numerous club members who, in spite of having been with LFR for a fair number of years, they do not know what the Club Championships is all about, hence there is low participation.

Action to be taken: The RS is kindly requested to please put all the above in writing and circulate the document to the Committee in view of having the Club Championship document made public to membership

Club Championships Awards

Discussion on the low attendance numbers on the last three Club Championships's awards event.

Discussions to host the Club Championships awards in a celebrative event together with the London Marathon trophies or host the event separately after the Club Championship's inaugural race at Eltham.

Discussions on the potential of changing the venue as low attendance could be due up to a certain extent to "fatigue" by using the Two Brewers, as there is no novelty, using the same venue every Thursday evening, attending the Pizza Party there in February and then returning to the same venue for a different occasion just a month later.

Compton's is excluded as the venue does not have the right atmosphere to host a running club's awards event.

Discussion on having a more effectively structured advertisement campaign, with the list of all the awards that will be given out, right at the beginning of the CC season.

Action to be taken: The RS is kindly requested to please create a proposal relative to the above

Also, just to let you know that I am also planning to have the leaderboard regularly updated and circulated to members after each of the races through the e-bulletin and also using some of the WhatsApp channels, if necessary, as to make the Club Championships as engaging and also as competitive for as many members as possible.

Euro Games Update

Track and Field is going to take place, it has been there as an option since the beginning and it is also full, the good news is that finally the event will be hosting two races, a 5k and a 10k. I am not sure how many members will be interested in

travelling to Lyon for just a 10k but I think there are going to be around 20 LFR members attending the Lyon events.

Also the 2026 Gay Games in Valencia from the 27 June to the 4th of July are on the radar and we need to start planning in advance for this event as well, as it is going to be very popular.

Triathlon Secretary

Suggestion of including Splash & Dash on the list of events for the Club Championships, or replace one of the races as an alternative option. The Splash & Dash events are relatively economical and by including such an event on the Club Championships, it would definitely attract more members to triathlon.

The Triathlon section brought to a very successful finish the last of the swimming courses for this year, they had been going on for five months and we have had about 20 members per month. Some of the participants were at a quasi beginner level when they joined and in the meantime have improved to a phenomenal level, some of the courses were exclusively for improving the participants' swimming technique, and we have had members who from a beginner's level went all the way through.

The tri camp has been particularly successful this year as well, we have had 30 participants and it was great fun, LFR has an incredibly strong female participation in triathlon so the tri camp was quite gender balanced and also a very nice mix of beginners and participants from previous years.

Discussion on the new tri hoodies

The current Tri hoodie version has very different colours from the previous version, as this is one that has embraced the new colours of the Club logo, and there are now being offered with the standard logo and the tri logo

The Committee votes unanimously in favour of endorsing both the above-mentioned versions.

Publicity Updates (P&C O)

The Committee wishes to express its thanks to CM for his incredible commitment and hard work dedicated into putting the ebulletin together, about three months before he was elected in the role.

There have been a few challenges since the beginning of the calendar year and even some more since the beginning of the Club year. Some unavoidable teething issues with the ebulletin but I am going to work on them.

Sadly lots of blurbs reach me long after the deadline and it would be enormously appreciated if all Committee members and other Club officers could be as respectful of the deadline as possible. I do appreciate that some Club events are taking place on Sunday and so photographs are often sent to me on a Sunday after the event but this is an understandable exception. The deadline for everyone to adhere is Saturday by 5pm.

Discussion on the Community WhatsApp chats

Being now officially in the role and also new, there are naturally some ideas for next couple of months which I think might be worth trying, and I do agree on the sector of the LFR social media with a couple of Committee members that the Club social media as they are at the moment are wildly inconsistent. We need to reset what the WhatsApp community is about, how it may be used by members with respect to their advantage and what can be done with all the existing chats.

Instagram is one of our strongest platforms and being managed by just one person is not enough. Cameron has done a brilliant work doubling the number of followers and understandably after three years he wishes to step down, so the Club needs to start recruiting members who have some experience with the platform and are also creative, bringing in suggestions and ideas, as it would be great if the Club could start creating some content, such as videos and reels. The platform needs a fresh perspective and at least a team of two volunteers who would like to take responsibility in bringing the Instagram account forward

Action to be taken: WP is kindly requested to liaise with Cameron and to manage the smooth transition, in addition to liaising with Craig for the call on volunteers

I don't think it would be difficult finding a couple of volunteers among the LFR members, all they need is some experience of their own and they will also learn from the process of how to make the LFR account appear fun and engaging.

Discussion on the coordination of the LFR Communications

Who is doing what and when and discussion on the LFR Website.

Action to be taken: CBP is kindly requested to please contact the LFR Webteam in regards to uploading new photos of the 2025/26 Committee on the website

There is also a need to advertise for some more ebuletin volunteers and to have at least another two to CM and to Glynn, so that having a team of four, each one will be doing an ebuletin per week and CM will have more free time to supervise the whole endeavour and also attend to other aspects of the role.

The next goal for me is to unify all the LFR platforms in terms of visual appearance and also get this unification extending to the content. Photographs are incredibly helpful as to promote events and a collective identity but what would be useful would be using these photos to tell a story, having members telling their experiences, inviting other groups of runners over, highlighting specific members, when they first joined, how they found the experience, where they are now in terms of sociability and running goals, etc. Once the ebuletin and the Instygram account have been sorted out and the WhatsApp community has also received some guidance, my ambition would be to have stories submitted each week, whereas now there is capacity for barely highlighting a story per month.

Discussion on the LFR Twitter Account and on the potential of starting using alternative platforms.

The LFR Committee votes and unanimously agrees to have the LFR Twitter account closed, though not completely deleted as to avoid someone else taking advantage of this and thus usurping the LFR handle.

Action to be taken: CBP is kindly requested to please make some research and find the LFR Twitter logging details

The Committee decides on a temporary moratorium on the creation and addition of any new groups on the Community Whatsapp, before a guidance of purpose and clarifications on its use and role are shared with membership.

Social Activities Update (SS)

Discussion on the return of First Thursday of the month drink event.

After a number of suggestions, the SS has decided to settle with The Village, as it is the only venue that offers an extended Happy Hour

Action to be taken: CBP and MR are kindly requested to please liaise in view of the post Hackney Half social

Action to be taken: MR is kindly requested to please follow up with the Crown and the Two Chairmen in view of the 2025 London Pride event

Membership Update (MS)

So far 584 members have autorenewed their membership with the Club and 600 have now successfully paid their fees for the new club year. There have been very few issues with the auto-renewal though much much fewer than last year.

All those who have already notified me that they do not wish to continue with LFR into the new club year, will have their data started to be deleted from the next week. So far 50 members have decided that they are not renewing.

In addition to that there are about 90 members who are currently in membership limbo, they have not renewed but they haven't contacted they they are wishing to move on either, and to all these members Gwen has sent an email through WebCollect informing them of the abover facts.

So, the Club is now at over 600 members, there is a possibility that we may have lost about 100 members, though the good news is that 500 of these 600 members that have renewed their membership, have also had their EA registrations renewed, which is every MS nightmare as it is a task that needs to be done manually.

Discussion on contacting members who have decided not to renew in view of feedback.

Discussion on removing those who are not LFR members from the WhatsApp groups and FB

Discussion on removing those who are not LFR members from the ebulletin

Action to be taken: GH, GW, CM and CBP are kindly requested to collaborate on removing from the ebuletin mailing list all those who have not renewed with LFR.

Operations Secretary

Discussion on the digital management system and on the suggestion of installing a race calendar on the website.

Discussions on several other aspects of the role.

Club Secretary

Volunteering Legacy Award

As you all know, with the new vest becoming an actual reality and with the new kit provider offering LFR the opportunity to purchase items individually and online, the role of the vest volunteer is going to become obsolete and redundant. For the past eleven years and probably more than that, all the previous versions of the LFR vest were purchased, handled and distributed by one and only volunteer. And if there is an average of about 50 vests purchased per year, then that volunteer must have single-handedly processed and distributed more than 500 of them by now. CD not only has been one of the longest -still serving- Club volunteers but has always been a person of very low profile, never boasting about having committed so much of his time and energy towards supporting LFR and in general a great asset to the Club.

As part of my volunteering coordinator responsibilities, I am always trying to find ways of showing some appreciation to those volunteering for LFR, a free race entry here and there, volunteer prioritisation for this and that, a bottle of wine for Christmas, etc, little things in the hope that it is the gesture that is being appreciated instead of any actual financial value.

IN view of this, have been talking in private to GH about finding ways through which the Club could potentially try to acknowledge and celebrate CD's contributions and have suggested presenting them with a gift on a specific occasion, yet to be defined, though not at the last AGM, where their name would have been sandwiched between other volunteers.

From my last 30th AC team meeting, DB said something about using the Drinks Event in July to award a Club member irrespective of competitive running and

athletic prowess that really resonated with me. So the suggestion would be to reward someone for their volunteering efforts and in consequence to all the above, hereby follows the suggestion for launching The LFR Volunteering Legacy Award.

"Acknowledging the need for a timely recognition of volunteering services to the Club, the LFR VLA is an award specifically created to be offered to the LFR volunteer who through their valuable volunteering efforts and contributions has had a positive lasting impact on the Club, leaving behind a recognised and enduring legacy."

Criteria: durability, positive Club impact and continuity of service.

We could obviously suggest a minimum amount of years acting as volunteer but on the other hand, it is best not to meticulously define every single detail in advance, leaving margin for some flexibility.

When: Besides the Drinks Event this July, the AGM is a pretty good choice, an important and substantial Club event, it is held regularly, it usually attracts about 100 members and there is still a certain dignity and prestige to the occasion, so it makes a rather good candidate for presenting it at the AGM.

By Whom: I have been experiencing HUGE problems in eliciting members to make suggestions for the FOTY and NOTY, let alone for a new award that is based on longevity of service, volunteering prominence and an alleged eminent legacy to the Club. In order to avoid confusing members and also eliminating the possibility of receiving nomination emails that are totally irrelevant, I would like to suggest the simplest of solutions, meaning leaving the suggestion on the nomination to come from the Committee, with a rationale on the choice of the suggested nominee that should be made public by the Committee through the ebulletin.

Besides CD, there is JR, one of the longest volunteers in a number of different roles within the Club, RG as one of the longest serving Circle Volunteers, now going in his ninth year of continuous service, and then FC and DA with eight years of Circle Volunteering each. MH has also been one of the longest serving coaches and AC is close by as one of the Tri Coordinators.

One last thing for your consideration: going with the traditional shield does not look appropriate, as a shield looks too "athletic" and thus unsuitable for this occasion, as this is a volunteering award, and the regular trophy cups mostly look vulgar, inelegant and tasteless.

As there are many worthy Club volunteers that should be awarded in following occasions, it would be best if there was a way of having an award that physically

allows the addition of engraved tags with every volunteer's name and their years of service to LFR.

For example, the Green Belt Relay organisers use a very simple wooden walking cane for the Veteran division, associating veterans/age/experience with a walking cane which shows a sense of humour and a level of creativity outside the standard athletic trophies; this cane has silver plated tags all along its length, with the name of each winning team and the year.

The Committee discusses further and unanimously approves the new VLA

2026 Hackney Half

After yet another in-person meeting with the event organisers followed by what has become an habitual chain of emails, LFR has managed to secure 70 community entries for the 2026 event at the rate of £30 + VAT, which is half of what the actual price-entry is, it is cheaper than the early-bird rate and it is also £15 less from the price community entries were purchased for the 2025 event earlier this year, which is a proof that perseverance pays off.

In addition, LFR has also managed to get five completely free entries, three more than we got this year, which will as per usual be offered to LFR members as an acknowledgement of their volunteering services.

I have committed to the race organisers that all entries will be allocated by the end of October 2025, so once the 2025 event is over, I will have an e-bulletin communication recommending for hasty and impulsive members to hold their horses on purchasing an entry for the 2026 event.

Discussion on the financial options in purchasing the above-mentioned Club entries.

BHFR Big Half Entries

As part of the LFR community engagement, we reached out to Bristol and BHFR in 2023 and in 2024, offering them a small number of the LFR Community Entries, as sharing is crucial for building stronger relationships and fostering the sense of community and connection among the International FR family.

Accordingly a very small number of entries has also been set aside for the BHFR and I was wondering whether the current Committee would agree to allow the continuity of this tradition of support, cooperation and sharing with the BHFR.

In support of the above proposal I would like to add that LFR held last year at the Sail Loft one of its most successful post Big Half social events ever, celebrating together with the BHFR.

The Committee agrees with the suggestion and unanimously votes in favour of the proposal.

Pride Run 10K donation

The Club has been historically offering a donation to the Pride Run 10K, further validating the fact that over the past 21 years the event has been the Club's most iconic race and thus practically cementing further the Club's collaboration and support towards the Pride Run 10K organisation. The Pride Run 10K is an independent organisation and LFR renews its bonds and support every year, through providing volunteers, Committee members, and a donation. The amount of the donation to the Pride Run depends entirely on the financial circumstances of the Club each year and on the Committee's discretion and decision.

In 2019 the amount donated was £600 but then came the Covid pandemic and the amount decreased, following a slight decline of the LFR membership.

In 2023 and in 2024 LFR donated £250 and for this forthcoming event on the 20th of September 2025, if this meets the approval of the Club treasurer and the consent of the Committee, I would like to suggest an increase that follows inflation rates, thus offering a donation of £350.

The Committee considers the above suggestion and are happy to repeat the donation of £250 that was offered to the event last year.

Co-Presidents

The IT went really well, there has been a suggestion from the IT Chair on whether it would be possible to invite them at the next RCM for an update?

I am afraid that they might have just been beaten to it by the Coaching Coordinator who has been invited to join the Committee at May RCM.

The Committee wishes to officially express its gratitude for the IT subcommittee's hard work and incredible efforts invested in planning, organising and delivering yet another incredibly successful IT.

Short discussion on the AGM.

In regards to the annual Isle of Wight weekend of fell races, LFR intends to run a trip this year as it doesn't clash with any other events, and it will be on the second weekend of September, between the 2025 Big Half and the Pride Run 10k.

As one of the last actions from the 2024/25 club year to be taken over into the new club year, the subject of DEI is to become a standard agenda item of discussion in the present as well as in all the forthcoming RCM.

Sonja Astfalck emailed the Co Presidents a list of practical and constructive suggestions

There has also reached us a separate suggestion coming from Alex Carington, who is the meantime has also been in discussion with Sonja, in launching a 12 weeks long women and NB training programme which will start in June and will take participants all the way to the race day of the Pride Run 10k in the middle of September.

Some of these training sessions will be deliberately timed so those participating will be able to attend the social afterwards, as an extra opportunity of engaging with runners who could then become potential members. The Club will need to advertise this, asking for a team of members to come forward and be prepared to support this training programme.

The Committee finds this a wonderful suggestion and agrees unanimously in offering its support to the above suggestion.

Discussion on the Women and NB run of the month

Discussion on welcoming new runners and the potential of tying it up with the buddy system.

Discussion on how to advertise all these initiatives as not to have them being limited within just Club members.

Action to be taken: GH is kindly requested to please circulate the email sent from Sonja to the rest of the Committee.