Minutes of the Chiltern Cross Country League AGM

Held on Monday 18 May 2026 in person at Fusion 2K Ltd, Ampthill and remotely on Teams

1. Attendees

Club	Attending in person	Attending remotely
Abingdon AC		Rachel Nixon
Ampthill & Flitwick Flyers RC	Ian Lambert, Denise Browning	
Banbury Harriers AC		Ros Kelling
Bearbrook Running & Tri Club		
Bedford and County AC	Ewan Wilson, Paul Gooding, Alan Turnbull	
Bicester AC		Emma Gould
Biggleswade AC		David Brown
Bracknell AC		Justin Spencer
Buckingham & Stowe RC		Robby Taylor
Chiltern Harriers AC	Sue Slade, Tom Dixon	Katie Royals
Dacorum AC		Andy Wass, Steve Russell
Daventry AC	Tricia Thorp	
Diamond Runners		
Gade Valley Harriers	Kim Morgan, Roland Kendall	Victoria Crawley-Wise
Hazlemere Runners		Katrina Rints
Headington RoadRunners		
Higham Harriers AC		
Leighton Buzzard AC	Richard, Inchley, James Lowe	
Leighton Buzzard Triathlon Club		
Luton AC	Alan Daglish	
Marshall Milton Keynes AC	Barry Hearn, Richard Pownall	
Milton Keynes Distance Project		
Northampton AC		
Olney Runners		
On The Run Aylesbury	Becky Honour	Kev Mccullagh
Oxford City AC	Myles Flemming	Richard Hart, Sarah Davies
Queen's Park Harriers	Bill O'Connor	
Redway Runners	Hannah Connelly, Simon Read, Fiona Spendlove	
Seven:Ten AC		
Silson AC		Bob Kellam
St Albans Striders	Louise Bentham	
Stevenage & North Herts AC		Adam Searle
Tring RC	Chris Olley, Nigel Lacey	Liz O'Keeffe
Vale of Aylesbury AC		
Watford Harriers		
Wellingborough & District AC		Steve Stredwick
Wycombe Phoenix Harriers AC		

Names in blue denote members of the Chiltern League Organising Team. Apologies received from: Dan Doherty Higham Harriers, John Griffiths Headington, Patricia Card Vale of Aylesbury

2. Review of previous minutes

It was noted in last year's minutes that the league was highly dependent on John Howe who was the only official to hold the Level 4 Endurance Referee qualification that was required. Sue Slade confirmed that based on league numbers a Level 3 qualification would suffice and that there were two individuals who were close to achieving this qualification who could help next season.

Sarah Davis from Events Sportswear attended events last year and had taken over the sale of hoodies alongside her general merchandise. This was considered a success so our agreement with her will roll forward into next season.

3. Report from the Chairman

The report acknowledged the support of the hosting clubs last season, the loyal group of officials, the individuals who came forward to support the officials when they were short on numbers, the marshals and the organising team. They were all thanked for their valuable contribution.

It contained a fascinating history going back to the 1980s and leading up to the position where the league was being held up solely by Bill O'Connor, Richard Inchley and Fiona Turner. After 45 years on the Committee and 35 years as the Chairman, Bill has taken the decision to step down from his role.

4. Tribute to key contributors to the Chiltern league

The league thanked Bill for everything that he had done for the league and were pleased to announce that he had been appointed as President so will hopefully still be a familiar figure at races and perform the honour of handing out the end of season awards. A commemorative award has been arranged for Bill and will be given to him in due course. We are greatly indebted to the contribution he has made which is immeasurable.

Recognition was also given to the outstanding support given to the league from Julie Davison-Ryan, John Howe and Nick Folwell.

5. Vacant Positions to fill

As a precursor to this agenda item, the match attendance for 2025/26 was discussed. The number of appearances overall increased by 7% from the prior year to 5,617 and the average number of appearances per person was broadly comparable with the prior year at 2.8. Tables were included in the pre-read which broke this down by club and age group.

Congratulations were given to Division 1 winners Chiltern Harriers AC, Division 2 winners Buckingham & Stowe, the Denis Orme Trophy winners Queen's Park Harriers. Buckingham & Stowe and Silson AC's successful season means that they will move up to Division 1.

The conversation then turned to the requirement to recruit more officials and fill vacant posts on the organising team which is crucial to continuing to run the league successfully.

Sue Slade explained that to gain the Level 1 endurance official qualification was reasonably straight forward, requiring two 2 hour online courses plus a DBS check. The cost was confirmed at £35 which clubs normally pay for themselves. If gaining funding from the club was proving problematic, then clubs were encouraged to have a conversation with the league.

The individuals who came forward to support the officials and results team at two of the meetings last season might be a useful start point for clubs to follow up to see if they were willing to take on more of a formal role. A list will be compiled and sent on.

Louise Bentham, Tom Dixon and Richard Pownall then ran through the gaps on the organising team that the league were looking to fill.

Clarity was given that two people could agree to share a post, and the registration coordinator role shared by Becky and Kev showed that this could work successfully. Also officials did not necessarily have to attend every match or stay for the whole day. People could help out for the junior races and then race themselves later in the day for example. The age requirement was confirmed at 16. Any help would be very much welcomed, although there is a particular need for female officials to help in the female finish funnels.

Post meeting update

A few people approached Sue about qualifying as an official which is an encouraging start. The bigger the pool of officials we can get means that the role can be spread around, avoiding it becoming too onerous for a few people. Clubs are therefore encouraged to continue canvasing for names.

We are also delighted to confirm that volunteers have come forward to fill the fixtures coordinator role and the results contingency role.

We are still looking for someone to fill the awards coordinator role so please continue to ask around at your clubs.

6. Financial update and subscription fees

The league treasurer, Richard Hart presented the receipts and payments schedule for 2025/26 which showed a surplus of £2,720 during the year compared to a break-even position of the year before. The closing bank balance on 14 April 2026 was £5,208. This is broadly where it should be to absorb any unexpected league costs going forward.

It was agreed that the fee policy would remain unchanged for 2026/27 which will be the second year running. That said, a club's fees may still increase or decrease from the prior year if their number of appearances year on year mean that they move up or down a fee band. Based on the current fee structure, the average cost per appearance is just under £3.

7. Fixture locations and dates

The table of fixture dates and proposed venues was discussed. Paul Gooding confirmed that these dates have now been finalised by the EA.

Oxford City AC kindly offered to host the second match on 14 November 2026 and Richard Inchley confirmed that Leighton Buzzard and Marshall Milton Keynes AC would co-host the first match on 10th October 2026 at Tear Drop Lakes.

That leaves 5 December 2026 where we still have no venue. Meetings have or are being set up with Stowe and Shuttleworth to discuss the possibility of using these locations.

Nigel Lacey from Tring RC, who is a retired member of the RAF and very familiar with their processes, agreed to help approaching RAF Halton.

As the league are always struggling to find new venues, if more than one becomes possible for 2026/27, then ideally the surplus one will be rolled over to the following season.

Paul Gooding highlighted that in January/February there was a lot going on particularly for younger runners with English Schools, Inter Counties and the National so we should be mindful of not loading too much on them. Numbers for seniors tend to drop off as well with the Cross Challenge and people starting marathon training. There could be a case for dropping one of the new year fixtures. He explained that next year's timetable from the EA is likely to be reorganised and this may give us the opportunity to revisit this area.

Post meeting note
The day after the AGM Simon Griffiths from Bearbrook RC confirmed that RAF Halton had come back with a firm 'no' due to security issues.

8. Other changes agreed for the 2026/27 season

(a) Age groups

The calculations for the new age groups were explained. The U12, U14, U16, and U18 will replace the U11, U13, U14 and U17. Although on the surface the age groups are a year older, the date the age is calculated on will be a year later (31 August 2027 rather than 31 August 2026) so the two changes effectively balance each other out. As an example, the school years which used to feed into the U11 category (i.e. years 5 and 6) will now feed into the U12 category. The date of birth ranges of athletes racing together will not change, it is only the name of the race that has changed by 1 year.

It was confirmed that the U12 races will not contribute to team scores, in line with EA guidelines of U12s being outside formal competition. **U12s will however now need an England Athletics registration number.**

Post meeting note
EA have confirmed that athlete who is not registered with EA can compete as a guest for 1 season, after which they must be a member of a Club affiliated to UKA and be registered. The FAQ section on the website covering U12 guest runners will be updated to reflect this.

(b) U20 women

It was agreed that U20 women will run in the senior women's race. It will be a smaller field than previous years as it covers a 2 year age span rather than 3. This means that the females are treated the same as the men.

(c) Female veteran categories

It was agreed that from 2026/27 the female veteran categories will align with the men's. They will therefore be in 10 year bands starting from 40, rather than 35 previously.

(d) Purchase of new shields/trophies to replace lost ones

It was agreed that 6 new shields would be purchased at a cost of around £500 for the following.

- Overall Division 2 Team (£105)
- Overall Female Team Division 2 (£85)
- Overall Male Team Division 1 (£85)
- Overall Male Team Division 2 (£85)
- Overall Junior Team Division 1 (£65)
- Overall Junior Team Division 2 (£65)

(e) Creating content creator team

Katie Royals explained what this would involve and asked attendees to share this with club members and encourage them to join the team.

Anybody who is interested can contact Katie directly at socialmedia@chilternccl.co.uk

(f) Allocation of numbers

In order to reduce the possibility of having to issue out of range numbers later in the season to clubs that have run out, the registration team will apply a bigger increase to the prior year usage (which is used as the baseline). Clubs will be written to with what this will give them for 2026/27. If they know of factors which would suggest a different figure would be better, they can then respond.

(g) Collection of the £5 for lost/forgotten numbers

Going forward the £5 charge for lost or forgotten numbers will be charged to clubs for them to recover from the athlete concerned. There are around 20 payments remaining unpaid from last season which will be added to the annual fee invoices. Clubs are strongly encouraged to reclaim these costs from individuals as the charge for them personally has proved to be an effective motivator to remember to bring along their number on race day.

9. AOB

- Redway kindly agreed to hand out the U12 guest numbers again next season.

10. Meeting close

A huge thank you was given to Andy Inchley who had provided the venue for the physical meeting and the tech support for the remote access.

A thank you was also given to all clubs that attended the meeting.