

Chair's Update – December 2024

To help us be an open and inclusive club for all our members, I am publishing a quarterly Chair's update to explain more about the day to day business of the club and the range of tasks the committee undertakes.

Committee priorities

Since September's AGM, we've had two committee meetings in which the main business has been preparing for the recent Special General Meeting where we voted to apply to become a Charitable Incorporated Organisation. We also reviewed the feedback from EA following the recent visit by London Clubs Support Manager Amy Murtagh, who was really impressed with what she saw and heard from Stragglers she met, and confirmed that we are one of the best run London clubs with our 7 out of 7 EA club standards in place. Putting those standards in place, covering areas like governance, safeguarding, diversity and inclusion and health and safety is a good example of some of the hidden work our committee oversees.

We've also appointed two new kit managers (Sue Howarth and Lawrence Duffy) to help manage the supply and communications around the new Stragglers kit, a new Social Secretary (Peter Wedderburn), discussed plans to develop the club's website further, started preparations for membership renewals in April 2025 and progressed the discussions with Bushy Park Sports Club on our Sports Partnership renewal agreement, which comes into effect on 1 March 2025. This is in addition to the regular work around race planning (we have separate race organising teams for the Cabbage Patch 10, Green Belt Relay, Wedding Day 7 and River Relay), planning for Winter Grand Prix fixtures, upcoming mob matches and arranging participation in XC events throughout the winter season.

Future focus

The Committee also has the ambition to help the club plan for a vibrant and healthy future, which includes all the work put into the CIO transition, the recent review and relaunch of our club kit, expansion of training opportunities, recruitment of new Straggler members and pursuit of increased race participation and achievement. As Chair, I am really proud of our club history and heritage but believe our focus should be on the future, to ensure we remain attractive to new members and offer the benefits expected of a modern, forward-thinking club. It's also becoming increasingly clear that running clubs have an important role to play in communities offering a range of benefits including physical health and mental well-being, but also an accessible social network and access to other community initiatives like local charities or other sporting opportunities – all for the cost of an affordable annual membership fee.

Your feedback

Whilst the AGM is an opportunity for members to ask questions of the committee or to propose new ideas for the club, this can be done at any time throughout the year, and we encourage the sharing of ideas or feedback from our members. There are committee members present at most Straggler sessions and always on a Thursday evening at BPSC, where you can also speak to me most weeks. You can also write to me with any comments or suggestions for the club via chair@stragglers.org

This is also a great opportunity to wish all Stragglers a happy and relaxing Christmas break and a healthy and injury free 2025.

Kevin Price
Chair of The Stragglers Running Club