

Dear Southville Running Club members,

At the SRCc 24 prize giving I announced I was stepping down from the role of chair of the club. However after discussions with my fellow directors I have agreed to their suggestion to remain in the role until the AGM rather than relinquish it, delegating the responsibilities for Tuesday nights. My hope is a volunteer will step forward as deputy chair to share the workload with a view to standing for election at the AGM in January 2025. If anyone is willing to volunteer as a deputy could they contact either Sam Blanning or myself via direct messaging.

If I may take the time to explain why I made the original announcement. The club has been a big part of my life since January 2009 when I rocked up outside Bristol South swimming pool where it met. It was relaxed then, easy going and rather naive about being an England Athletic club. Coming from a big, forward thinking outfit it was refreshing but a bit weird in a nice way. I found myself introducing stuff to the club like interval sessions, hill reps and fartlek; the basics of how to run out like 'keep left' and 'keep right' even getting everyone to wear hi viz in winter. No one knew what a racing licence was let alone there were guaranteed London Marathon places available for club runners. All this in the first year of running out with them.

Much has followed since, being secretary for a number of years along with the club's chair and co-founder Emma Williams; co-founding with Tony Myers the Nightingale Nightmare; the match your time race; getting the club to move to a Not for Profit company status to protect the members and committee - I attended a number of eye wateringly boring meetings on behalf of the club to find out about this. Many memorable days of running, racing, drinking and nights partying have taken place through my membership of SRC in the last fifteen years.

I was elected to chair at the beginning of the year slightly to my surprise and from day one I had the objective of making the committee and its officers front and centre. In a word, divest some of the decision making, the role of chair to be less of a focus. I had hoped this would have been as a runner and group leader as well but after nearly 9 months of injury it finally 'got to me'.

With the knowledge boxes which needed to be ticked such as our new constitution and website, EA standards regarding welfare and inclusion, our future at the Southbank Club secured for the foreseeable future along with our growing social media presence now have been completed. I felt I was not leaving the role with the club in a bad place. I watched as club officers, our captains, quartermaster and welfare team have been absolutely amazing doing a fantastic job along with the group leaders and other members old and new stepping up to the plate. Special mention must go to my fellow directors, Sam Blanning, who's coped with a lot this year, managing the huge amount of admin along with the fallout from last year's turbulence as well as leading groups, Bindal Shah in implementing the changes in how membership is managed and of course the ever present and reliable Andy Ventham as treasurer.

Chris Hopes
Chair

Southville Running Club