

# AMMONITE Lewes Athletic Club Newsletter



February 2024

Please send contributions and corrections to errors to [newsletter@lewesac.co.uk](mailto:newsletter@lewesac.co.uk).

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# 1. Getting to know you No 19 Andrew Chitty

## My running life

I used to do well at running at primary school, but I didn't take it up seriously till my family moved to Illinois for two years when I was 11, and we were expected to do a sport at my Junior High School. Cross country running seemed less intimidating than the alternatives, so I was issued with a sweatshirt and sweatpants and joined the squad.

I can still remember my first solo run, jogging in my oversize gear down a long straight street at night in suburban Urbana-Champaign, with the street lights on either side narrowing to infinity ahead of me, and overcome by an ecstatic happiness. I trained excessively hard over those two years, and again when we went back to the US for another year. But I never quite made the first team and eventually gave it up.



**Above: At Beachy Head 2023**

For the next 40 years I became a recreational jogger, until in 2010 a leaflet came through our door in Lewes inviting me to join Lewes AC's 'jogging group'. I thought this couldn't be too daunting so I went along. An athletic-looking older man, who I later came to know and love as our chair Pete Masters, stood at the trackside with a stopwatch while the 'regulars' and the 'newbies' cantered round the track doing intervals.

I was thrilled to discover that I was faster than all the newbies and most of the regulars, but not so happy when I realised the next day that I had pulled a hamstring and could hardly walk. I wasn't able to run for another six weeks. Lewes AC had introduced me to my first running injury!

But eventually I came back to the track and the Tuesday training runs, and the rich abundance of running events that the club has introduced me to over the last 13 years, including eight marathons and countless fun runs.

In particular the South Downs Way Relay is the greatest race I've ever taken part in, with 30 or 40 teams of six running a baton between Beachy Head and Winchester throughout the length of a long mid-summer day from early dawn to 8.00pm. I don't think I've ever been part of something so ... grandiose.

And meanwhile, after a stint as Membership Secretary, I think I have found my niche as club Compiler of Race Results – a role that gives me a pleasure to fulfil that only those with a certain bent of mind will know.

Above all, though, the club has introduced me to the idea of distance running as a social activity. I had always liked the image of myself as a long-distance runner, but thanks to Alan Sillitoe's book *The Loneliness of the Long Distance Runner* I had always thought of it as a quintessentially lonely one. But not any more. The club has been a constant source of companionship, friendship and encouragement.

My running career has had three parts, but the Lewes AC part leaves the other two in the dust!

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## 2. Sussex County Cross Country Championships 6<sup>th</sup> January 2024

It may have been that people were still getting over Christmas, but turn-out was not that great, and in some cases did not reflect the true merits of the club.

Lewes senior men achieved a respectable 4<sup>th</sup> team place, but it was down to the Under 20 Men to get on the podium with a 3<sup>rd</sup> team place.

Once again the Under 17 Women were all in the top ten finishers, with individual gold and silver for Ava James and Esme Stephenson, and an inevitable first team place.

The Under 15 Boys are really shaping up with an outright gold for Jacob Trotman and fourth place for Michael O'Connor, and a place on the podium as the overall third team. The Under 13 Girls also fought for an overall third team position, beating Brighton and Hove by single point.

### Senior Men



All images by AC\_PHOT

Pos	Time	Bib	Forename	Surname
20	38:26	65	Toby	Meanwell
21	39:20	77	Ben	Pepler
28	40:10	71	Paul	Newsome

32	40:59	91	George	Stewart
35	41:06	24	Chris	Coffey
37	41:17	38	Mike	Fletcher
70	50:39	75	Dominic	Osman-Allu

Team position 4th

### Under 20 and Senior Women

Pos	Time	Bib	Forename	Surname	Age cat
10	35:58	137	Darja	Knotkova-Hanley	SW
17	36:35	129	Jenna Louise	French	SW

### Under 20 Men

Pos	Time	Bib	Forename	Surname
6	29:27	621	Charlie	Wright
12	32:28	617	Gabriel	Penrose
14	32:41	616	Stan	Pendered
16	33:07	631	Archie	Guppy

Team position 3rd

### Under 17 Men

Pos	Time	Bib	Forename	Surname
21	21.21	417	Harvey	Perry
23	21.3	424	Theo	Tarafder
24	21.37	398	George	Brooks
25	21.47	423	Isaac	Tarafder
34	23.19	399	Jack	Cooley

Team position 5th

### Under 17 Women

Pos	Time	Bib	Forename	Surname
1	21.04	443	Ava	James
2	21.11	455	Esme	Stephenson
6	22.18	454	India	Sommerville
10	23.39	456	Grace	Tuesday

Team position 1<sup>st</sup>



**Under 15 Boys**



Pos	Time	Bib	Forename	Surname
1	14.44	344	Jacob	Trotman
4	15.06	335	Michael	O'Connor
15	16.11	317	Toby	Cherry
16	16.12	322	Max	Farley
18	16.3	338	Charlie	Perry
20	16.51	313	Archie	Besley

Team position 3<sup>rd</sup>



## Under 15 Girls



Pos	Time	Bib	Forename	Surname
6	17.08	391	Eva	Winton
12	18.12	348	Amelie	Bedford
17	18.35	381	Florence	Tuesday
24	19.2	376	Nesta	Pring
25	19.21	389	Jess	Wickens

Team position 3<sup>rd</sup>, pipping Brighton by 1 point!

## Under 13 Boys

Pos	Time	Bib	Forename	Surname
17	13.39	249	Otto	de Burca
30	15.35	264	Thomas	Muddle

## Under 13 Girls

Pos	Time	Bib	Forename	Surname
5	14.04	292	Isobel	Docwra
18	15.43	285	Ella	Bartholomew
19	15.57	299	Sunshine	Love
27	16.45	287	Millie	Button

Team position 4<sup>th</sup>

## Under 11 Girls

Pos	Time	Bib	Forename	Surname
14	9.52	232	Thea	Whitbourn
27	11.05	214	Milly	Dennis

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### 3. Never mind the weather! Sussex Sports Hall athletics Worthing 14<sup>th</sup> January 2024

According to Sussex Athletics, 'Sportshall Athletics is an indoor mix of fun and competition during the winter months for U11, U13 and U15 athletes'. Since 2021 separate leagues for East and West Sussex have been merged into one based at Worthing Leisure Centre.

As its name suggests all the competition is based on activities that can be done in a sports hall. These activities comprise :

- Speed Bounce
- Standing Long Jump
- Standing Triple Jump
- Vertical Jump
- Balance Test
- Target throw
- Hi Stepper
- Obstacle Relay
- 4X1 Lap relay
- Over Under Relay
- 1+1 Lap relay

If you are wondering what some of these entail you can go to <https://www.sussexathletics.net/take-part/sportshall/> and look at the YouTube videos of the competitions in action.

Lewes AC competes in the league against Brighton, Crawley, Chichester, Haywards Heath, Horsham, Phoenix and Worthing.

After the second match of the season on the 14<sup>th</sup> January 2024, Lewes has yet to threaten most of the competing clubs, but even so has shown its potential by outperforming Phoenix and Haywards Heath. Lewes Girls are consistently better represented than the Boys and outscoring them.

You can find more about the outcomes of the first two matches as <https://www.sussexathletics.net/2023-results/> and clicking on the Results for 'Sussex Sportshall League Match 2 14.1.24'. The final match is on Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> March at Worthing Leisure Centre.



Each year teams are selected to represent Sussex at the regional inter-county events for under-11s and combined under-13s and under-15s, which are held at Burgess Hill. The events bring the most talented youngsters from each county league programme together to create an exciting culmination.

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## 4. Queen of the South: Grace Tuesday breaks 800m record

### SEAA 2024 Indoor Champs at Lee Valley 15<sup>th</sup> January 2024

Not only did Grace win gold in the Under 17 Women's 800m final at the South of England 2024 Indoor Championships, but her 2:10.31 time replaced the Championship Best Performance (CBP) of 2:13.17 previously set in 2017.

Lewes AC also had plenty of pole vaulters participating and finished the day with medals from Under 15 girls Beth Boyes (silver with 2.70m), Imogen Taylor (bronze with 2.60m) and Bill Scott, 2<sup>nd</sup> in the Under 15 boys with 2.70m.

#### Classified Lewes AC performances

##### Under 15 Girls 800 Metres (b) Heat 2

<i>Posn</i>	<i>Num</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Perf Details</i>
4	284	Florence Tuesday	2.45.06

##### Under 15 Girls 60m Hurdles (a) Heat 1

6	298	Fernanda Wolfson	10.54
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##### Under 15 Girls Pole Vault (b) Final

<i>Posn</i>	<i>Num</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Perf Details</i>
2	308	Beth Boyes	<b>2.70</b> 2.30o, 2.40o, 2.50o, 2.60xo, 2.70xo, 2.80xxx
3	317	Imogen Taylor	<b>2.60</b> 2.10o, 2.20o, 2.30o, 2.40xo, 2.50xo, 2.60xo, 2.70xxx
4	318S	Sylvie Ward	<b>2.50</b> 2.30o, 2.40o, 2.50o, 2.60xxx
8	314	Iris Hitchmough	<b>2.40</b> 2.10o, 2.20xo, 2.30xxo, 2.40o, 2.50xxx
10	298	Fernanda Wolfson	<b>2.20</b> 1.90o, 2.10o, 2.20xo, 2.30xxx
13	312	Elizabeth Higgins	<b>1.90</b> 1.90o, 2.10xxx

##### Under 17 Women 800 Metres (b) Heat 4

<i>Posn</i>	<i>Num</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Perf Details</i>
1	620	Grace Tuesday	2.14.44 Q

##### Final

1	620	Grace Tuesday	2.10.31 new CBP
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##### Under 17 Women 60m Hurdles (a) Heat 4

6	631	Natasha King	11.41
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##### Under 17 Women Pole Vault (b) Final

<i>Posn</i>	<i>Num</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Perf Details</i> Final
5	656	Ava Hayes	<b>3.00</b> 2.80xo, 2.90-, 3.00xo, 3.10xxx
10	665	Phoebe Scott	<b>2.40</b> 2.40xo, 2.60xxx
10	651	Manon Barbet	<b>2.40</b> 2.20o, 2.40xo, 2.60xxx

##### Under 17 Women Shot (b) Final

11	631	Natasha King	<b>8.53</b> 8.34, 8.53, 8.34
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##### Under 15 Boys Pole Vault (b) Final

3	177	Bill Scott	<b>2.70</b> 2.50o, 2.70o, 2.80xxx
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##### Under 17 Men Pole Vault (b) Final

5	476	Ivan Wray	<b>2.90</b> 2.90o, 3.10xxx
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## 5. Sussex County Master Cross-Country 20<sup>th</sup> January 2024 Combe Farm, Lancing

All the races were run over an approximately 8,000m/ 5 mile course. It was a pity that there were not more Lewes AC participants. It looks sunny but it was very cold.

### Lewes AC Women overall standings

Place	Time	Bib	Runner	Category	Category Place
3	33:21	148	Jenna Louise French	W35	2
18	38:19	177	Sally Norris	W45	10
20	38:22	178	Becky Trotman	W45	11
41	42:24	201	Helen Bowman	W55	6



63 runners competed in this race. Congratulations on Jenna's overall third place and silver in the W35 category. It is possible for a runner in a higher age category to score in a lower category in the team competition if there is a gap. Thus Helen Bowman was able to be counted as a W45 and contribute to the third place in the W45 category.

### Lewes AC Mens M35/M40 'Hard' standings

Place	Time	Bib	Runner	Category	Category Place
16	30:33	41	Vesa Lindberg	M40	11

44 runners in this race.

## Lewes AC Mens M50/M60/M70 standings

Place	Time	Bib	Runner	Category	Category Place
4	31:44	124	Jonathan Burrell	M60	1
10	33:46	80	Colin Bennett	M50	8
45	39:12	82	Dominic Osman-Allu	M50	30
74	47:54	81	Peter Miller	M50	41

This race attracted 78 participants.

Congratulations on Jonathan's overall fourth place and a gold award in the M60 category.

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## 6. South of England Champs at Beckenham Place Park Saturday 27th January 2024

### *Dave Leach reports.*

Firstly I must thank Becky for taking the tent and banner. Also thanks to Charlie [Critchley] for coming to support when the adult men had no runners. I'm sure the athletes were pleased with his encouragement. Thanks both.

The Southern's covers the whole of the South from Norfolk down to Cornwall and every county south of that line. Generally the South is the strongest area in the country so any athlete competing is good.

As with most events this time of year there are always a few drop-outs with illness but we still managed to field full teams in 13/15/17 men as well as 15/17 women where 4 runners score.

### **11am Under 15 Boys 4.5k**

The boys start the day off as usual at this event.

Jacob Trotman led the team home in 10th place having finished 136th last year – an amazing run. Not far behind was Michael O'Connor [1st year in age group] 34<sup>th</sup>, then Toby Cherry, 113<sup>th</sup>, Max Farley 117<sup>th</sup> and Charlie Perry 140<sup>th</sup>. 181 finished in all.

Lewes AC finished as 10<sup>th</sup> team.

### **Under 13 Girls 3k.**

Unfortunately, Millie Button was the only runner in this age group but she said she enjoyed it and finished 129th of 154 finishers.

### **Under 13 Boys 3k**

With another full team of 4.

51st was Otto De Burca and only 6 secs behind was Edward Hilton in 63rd [yes just 6 secs and 12 places, so really packed together all the way].

Rex Hastings was 127th [1st year] and Casper Dennis ran well given his knee problems of late in 151st out of 174 finishers

The team finished 18th.

### **Under 15 Girls 4.5k**

There were just 4 in this race:

50<sup>th</sup> Eva Winton  
86<sup>th</sup> Amelie Bedford  
109<sup>th</sup> Nesta Pring  
120<sup>th</sup> Florence Tuesday  
out of 183 finishers.  
They were the 13<sup>th</sup> team.

These girls have been together for approximately 3 years and are improving nicely, following the footsteps - not quite literally! - of the Under 17 Women.

### **Under 17 Men 6k**

At this age the athletes are getting stronger and the standard is much better at the front and the difference in stature can be massive.

So all the men did well and packed in close together;  
106th Harvey Perry [for someone who mixes endurance with sprints a good run].  
110th Isaac Tarafder  
124th Theo Tarafder  
150th Jack Cooley  
out of 166 finishers. The team was 18th

These men have raced this event since Under 13 so it is really impressive to still be there and getting better all the time.

### **Under 17 Women 6k.**



AC\_PHOT

This is the first time the women have had to race this far: it's normally 5k.

Unfortunately, Esme had to pull out having been unwell since the Schools champs. But as the girls are a very strong team this did not detract from what was a great performance by both the team

and individuals. Sadly, Lara had to pull out not feeling great but that still left us with 4 runners so we knew we would have a team place. As has been the case this winter Ava led the girls and had a great race, always in the top group from the start to finish, just outside the medals in 4th place

Grace Tuesday was back in the mud after her indoor 800m two weeks ago. She had a solid run to finish 19<sup>th</sup>. Next came India Sommerville 27<sup>th</sup>, another 800m track runner primarily, and rounding off the team was another great performance from Darcy Pring who thinks she has been struggling of late but pulled out a great run to finish in 51<sup>st</sup> out of 121 finishers.

The total numbers might not be as big as the younger age groups but, as with the Under 17 men, the standards are very good. These girls have raced all three years at Beckenham and have been 2<sup>nd</sup> team as Under 15s in 2022, 1<sup>st</sup> Under 15 team in 2023 and now the 3<sup>rd</sup> team Under 17 in 2024. So they have a complete collection of medals. Here's looking forward to next year.

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## 7. Getting to know you No 20 Claire Hawes

**'I'm the voice of the recreational runner'**



You see, I primarily run to maintain fitness and well-being. The toasty feeling that follows a run on a chilly day and the positive impact on my mood keeps me lacing up my running shoes.

The beauty of running lies in its accessibility: no need to drive – I can step out of my front door.

I don't run races to win. But I delight in my collection of medals (AKA bling) that reward my training and participation.

Here's a funny thing. A decade ago, envisioning myself willingly running three to four times a week would have seemed unthinkable. As a child, I hated running, even using fake sick notes to escape

cross-country races. That all changed during a Lewes Outdoor Fitness exercise class that included running the Twittens.

At first, I struggled, but I conquered the challenge with guidance to shed my ego and adopt a run/walk approach. As my confidence grew, I discovered Parkrun, a hugely welcoming and supportive community.

Then, in January 2020, I made a New Year's resolution to enhance my Parkrun performance and explore new routes, so I joined Lewes Athletics Club.

It proved to be the best decision made. During lockdown, Lewes AC's virtual 5ks and Strava challenges led me to embrace longer distances, including a half marathon on my 50th birthday.

The many different types of runners I've met in Lewes AC have taught me that I can achieve any goal I set step by step. Inspired by this community, last year, I accepted the opportunity to train as a run leader.

Meeting people at the outset of their running adventures brings me immense joy. My story stands as proof: if I can run, anyone can.

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## **8. Out and about with Lewes AC**

*Lewes AC caters for all levels of running and athletics.*

### **Tribute to Andrea**

Time seems to be speeding up, and it does not seem that long ago that the much-loved Andrea Ingram was leading us 'improvers' on Saturday mornings on the track, around town on winter Tuesday evenings and out on the Downs on Summer evenings and weekends.

We had run in her memory up to Black Cap on Su, followed by warming beverages at the tennis club. *It is still the intention of the club to have a memorial out on the Downs somewhere to commemorate Andrea and Ammonite will report on progress.*







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## Hills Progression Group

Graduates (and others) from the last cohort of Couch to 5k took part in a series of progression runs shepherded by Lewes AC Coaches and Run Leaders.



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And preparations were made for the next cohort of running beginners.



As will be seen, there could debate about whether the first step is *always* the hardest.

Meanwhile

### **Tom Evans (first claim Lewes AC, second claim Belgrave Harriers)**

#### **Leicestershire & Rutland County Championships 6th January 2024**

This was a 10k distance race.

Pos	Time	Runner
1.	35:00	Tom Evans

#### **British Athletics Cross Challenge (inc UKA World Cross Country Trial) 20<sup>th</sup> January 2024**

This was another 10k course at Parliament Hill

2.	30:00	Tom Evans
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#### **Midland Counties Cross Championship Leamington Spa 27<sup>th</sup> January**



Tom Evans in Lewes AC colours at Leamington Spa – thanks to Chris Gilbert.

1.	38:02	Tom Evans
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## The Montane Winter Spine 19<sup>th</sup> January 2024

This is a non-stop 268 mile race along the Pennine Way from Edale in Derbyshire to Kirk Yetholme on the Scottish borders. Accumulative climb over the course is 10,941 metres. The time limit is 168 hours. (Interestingly there is an account of going down the Pennine Way in Rayner Wynn's *Landlines* which is impressive, but in a very different way).

Lewes AC's Rick Curtis participated in this year's event. Today's technology allowed you to follow Rick in real-time, and the LAC Races WhatsApp had a running commentary. There was some pride as Rick was awarded Good Samaritan credit for helping a distressed runner down to the next Control Point. Rick made it to the 4<sup>th</sup> Control Point (out of 5) before he had to retire. If you look at where he was on a map it is stunning how far he had gone.

### **Rick Curtis writes**

*After managing 180 miles of fairly intense pain, The Spine wins again. I came into this race unprepared, injured actually, and thought perhaps I could escape what was the most likely outcome.*



*But on a race this hard and this far, you'll get caught out if you're not damn near 100% fit and healthy. And this year was soooo cold. Brrr...down to -14C on Cross Fell where my hamstring blew up, one more problem to manage in addition to a damaged cruciate ligament and tendinosis of my ankle flexor. My leg became less and less useful, I was slowing down, getting colder and a bit concerned to get to the safety of Gregg's Hut. I finally made it to the checkpoint in Alston, needing to lift my right leg with my hands to get it over the endless \*\*\*\*\*stiles that line the last few miles of the leg. I won't be back next year but perhaps in the not too distant future. I can't yet say I was beaten by the Spine but by my own health and fitness. The itch is not yet scratched and the next time I have a go I want to be strong and healthy.*

*It's difficult to convey the profundity of these crazy ultra events unless you take one on. You learn so much whether you win, lose, finish or DNF. All the self talk is insane. Withdrawing from a race can lead to thoughts of shame and disappointment, self doubt (could I have gone on??), while the euphoria of completing one reinvigorates self belief and enthusiasm for more and bigger challenges as we search for our 'limit'. Alas, I don't think there is a limit, only a thirst to break free from our normally prescribed lifestyles, where everything is instant and wrapped in plastic. Ultras are the slow food movement of the trail running world where you get to experience your unfolding, in all its sticky, snotty mess, and intensely throbbing painfulness one step at a time for hours or days on end.*

*Goodbye for now Spine! Next stop: UTS100M.  
Hallucinations likely*

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