



North Shields Polytechnic Club
Athletics club based in Whitley Bay

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TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT
June 2021

**NORTH SHIELDS POLYTECHNIC CLUB CIO
TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT**

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**CHARITY NUMBER
1175041**



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Intro

Due to Covid-19 we were again unable to hold our AGM which was due to happen in April. Rather than postpone indefinitely, our trustees have agreed to cancel the AGM for this year and to share information with our members digitally via this report and invite any questions via email to trustees@nspoly.org.

The trustees are pleased to present their Annual Report together with the financial statements of the Charity for 12-month period to March 2020 which are also prepared to meet the requirements of a Chair's report and accounts for the Companies Act purposes.

The financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011 and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard's applicable to the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2015).



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Chair's Report

One year on from our Annual Report 2020, I did not expect to have the year we had. I commented last year that *"Great change has been experienced by the club over the past 24 months"*... little did I know the extra challenge all of us would face over the following 12 months.

The track was opened last summer. Amazingly worked on during the first lockdown, giving us a boost when we needed it. North Tyneside Council can only be congratulated on what they have done for us in that regard. Limited budget, a lockdown, extra spend where it was needed and even now, they are adjusting and listening to our changing requirements and providing help where they can.

The pandemic has made many of us realise how much we all need each other. Isolated training, one hour's exercise, exercising with the kids in front of You Tube... all those challenges but again and hopefully for the longer term, we can all train and compete as a team.

Our Trustee Team consistently discuss the fantastic togetherness of our club. Led by our coaching and volunteer teams, our members are proud to be part of something so special. To celebrate, many of you will have seen the club is providing a training t-shirt for all paid-up members (as at 30th June). Make sure you don't miss out!

Which prompts me to thank our coaches and volunteers, who throughout each lockdown have worked tirelessly to do what they can, provide support to members and plan for a return to normality. Most of us don't see half of what goes on, it is seriously impressive.

Thank you to all our volunteers for everything you do for us!

We have always been very careful with our finances; this year has been no exception. However, we have been keen to support any area of the club that requires extra funding. If your area needs help, please do contact us and we can work together to make the best of our resources.

Finally, I would like to say the same thing as last year and it is ever so important to us.

This club is about inclusion. Whatever background, however talented, whichever discipline, whomever you are...the club has a place for you.

Thank you for all your support and good luck getting back to training and competitions.

John Sutcliffe

John Sutcliffe
Chair of Trustees
Trustees@nspoly.org



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Trustees

Normally at our AGM we would ask our members to approve the Minutes of the Previous Meeting and the appointment of new trustees. We are delighted to confirm that the board have agreed the appointment of one new trustee during the period.

Simon Jamison – joined October 2020

Simon is a longstanding, valued member of the Poly and is a key member of our coaching and comms teams. He was also previously a trustee in 2019, having stepped down for a few months in early 2020 to concentrate on coaching. We are delighted to see him return.

We have said goodbye to one trustee since our last Annual Report:

Jim Richardson – resigned May 2021

Jim was a trustee for almost two and a half years, bringing extensive experience from his time as trustee for another large North East sports charity, together with his commercial and charity events management and marketing experience. During his time as a trustee at the Poly, Jim has been a key member of our comms and events teams.

Thank you, your immense work has been greatly appreciated.

Our remaining trustees will stay in their positions. They are:

John Sutcliffe - Chair
Patrick Houghton – Charity Secretary
Ben Willcox – Treasurer
Amanda Hall – General and Finance
Graham Lewis-Dale – Trustee Membership and Retail
Natasha Newson – Funding
Greg Penn – Track Manager
Bruce Robertson – Coaching Trustee

We are always looking to enhance our Trustee Board in terms of diversity and expertise. If you feel you are able to give something back and excel in this challenging role, please contact one of the trustees to discuss further. We would love to hear from you.



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Life Membership

The trustees have the discretion to designate members as Life Members. Nominations can vary from outstanding loyalty to the club, outstanding performances over a period of time, and long loyal service or backing to the benefit of the club.

Of course, there may be other cases worthy of Life Membership, subject to the board's discretion. This is not about being the highest performing athletes, but about any role contributing to the club over a meaningful period of time.

This year nominations have been received and voted for by the trustees for:

Steve Turner – Head of Junior Tri

Steve has hugely exceeded in his role, gone over and above, and is highly regarded by all members of the club and hugely outside of our organisation in the competitive world of triathlon. Steve was awarded 2019 Children's Coach of the Year by Triathlon England.

Our Junior Tri section has become a huge success and continues to thrive thanks to Steve and his team's efforts.

We are looking at refreshing our way of recognising exceptional service to the club. Details will be released during the year. Feedback is always welcome.



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Member Achievements

The past year has seen a number of high-profile achievements across all sections of the club, particularly as events have started to open-up as lockdown restrictions lift.

Track and Field

Despite a relatively quiet year for competition due to Covid-19, our Track and Field athletes have achieved a lot, including selection for national events and participation in regional and/or national championships.

We start with James Wordsworth, who recently won the English Under 20 Championships in the discus and is currently placed 2nd in the UK rankings. To add to this James is also ranked 10th in the shot.

Eight athletes were selected by Northumberland Schools. Four of these are recent acquisitions from Morpeth Harriers who transferred to the Poly with their coach, Dave Thomas. For a coach to have four athletes from their group is, itself, a tremendous achievement and illustrates what Dave has brought to the Club. The eight that have been selected are:

- James Wordsworth - Senior Boys Discus
- Zac Old - Inters Boys 800 metres
- Melody Brooks - Inters Girls 200 metres
- Anna Fitzpatrick - Inters Girls High Jump
- Rhys Bruton - Junior Boys Long Jump
- Hannah Lott - Junior Girls 75 metres hurdles
- Kaitlyn Waddell - Junior Girls Hammer
- Georgia Turner - Junior Girls Hammer

From one end of the age groups to another; the Poly was represented by 14 athletes at the North East Masters Track and Field Championships. They competed across 11 events and brought home 30 medals. Between them, they achieved: 17 Championship titles, 8 new Personal Bests, 6 new Masters Championship records, 4 new all-time Masters records, and 3 new UK records. Highlights include:

- Kath Stewart posted new UK records for the 100m, 200m and 400m, which by default are also new Championship and all-time Masters records.
- Bruce Robertson added the M55 High Jump record to the M40, M45 and M50 records that he already holds. His jump of 1:53 also is an all-time record for Masters athletics.
- Stuart Lynn set new Championship records for the M60 100m and 200m.
- Greg Penn achieved clear wins in the 800m, 1500m and 5000m.
- Paul Dodds achieved Championship winning performances in the 100m and 200m, and second place in the javelin.
- Trevor Straker (High Jump and Shot), Alan Brownrigg (Javelin) and Rob Snow (Hammer) were all crowned North East Champions.
- Neil Dick posted a new personal best of 69.5s which saw him crowned as North East M55 Champion.



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- Becky Coleman picked up a silver medal in the 1500m, and Richard Hanley picked up a silver medal in the 800m and a bronze in the 1500.
- Nadia Leake, a newcomer to NSP and to sprinting, set a new PB of 13.75s in the 100m which won her the silver medal.
- Paul Fisher set new PBs in both the 100m and 200m, which gave him two bronze medals.
- Steve Dodds annihilated his previous personal bests for 100m, 200m, and 400m and picked up three silver medals in the process.

Cross Country

Due to Covid-19, the only XC event that has been able to take place over the last 12 months is the NECAA Senior XC Relays in April 2021. Our amazing masters ladies achieved first placed team (Stephanie Dann, Becky Coleman, Alison Smith) and fifth placed team (Katherine Davis, Natalie Thorburn, Michelle Thomson). Our masters mens' teams placed 11th (David Quinn, Richard Hanley, Michael Parkinson) and 30th (Barry Young, Alan Whitley, Martin Frost). Our senior women's team also did well, placing 18th and 24th, and our senior men's team placed 12th (Tom Penfold, Joseph Mulroy, Paul Richardson and Patrick Houghton) and 18th (Jon Heaney, Rory McConnachy, Graham Hall, Greg Penn). Our XC captains are keeping their fingers crossed for plenty of XC races (and plenty of mud, rain and hills) for the coming year.

Fell Running

Whilst the pandemic had a significant effect on our fell runners, with all races were cancelled for the remainder of 2020 and many in the early months of 2021, some of our fell runners still managed to get out into the hills when restrictions were lifted. Danny Richardson embarked on a huge challenge with Jimmy Anderson by running from the Angel of the North to Edinburgh (189 miles) in July 2020. Graham Lewis-Dale ran the 10in10 No Hope Ultra run in the Lakes (40 miles with over 15,000ft of ascent) in September 2020 and gained the quickest time ever at North Shields Poly. Jon Heaney successfully completed Winter The McWilliams long (42 miles) with Graham Lewis-Dale in December 2020. Jonathan Jamison continued his ultra-running streak, taking part in Hardmoors races of 30, 40 and 60 miles over the year. Mark Smith completed the Montane Spine Race (268 miles) in June 2021, taking one day off his previous time, and finishing in 136 hours and 38 minutes.



Triathlon

30 athletes have represented North Shields Poly in at least one multi-sport race so far this season: 14 ladies and 16 men. Between them, they have achieved 7 age group wins, plus 3 overall ladies' wins including one Triathlon England Age Group Champion.

Other fantastic achievements include:

- Stephanie Dann won her age group at the Yorkshire Standard Distance Duathlon which was also the British Championships.
- Adam Smith was 5th in age group at the Nottingham Outlaw Half Ironman.
- Jimmy Anderson was 3rd in age group and 7th overall at the A Day in the Lakes triathlon (half ironman).
- Roger Makepeace was 1st in age group, Richard Johnstone 2nd in age group, and Becky Coleman 2nd in age group at Leeds Triathlon.
- Cristina Tyley was 1st in age group and 2nd lady overall in aquabike at Northumberland Triathlon.

Athletes selected to represent Great Britain in their age group at the European Championships in Spain or the World Championships in Australia in 2022 include: Stephanie Dann, David Quinn, Claire Harlow, Christine Burns, Peter Clayton, Neil Dick, Sammy Nic, Andrew Philips, Peter Atkinson, Adam Smith, Louise Turnbull, Alan Turnbull, Becky Coleman and Alison Smith.

Last but not least, we are excited to be once again hosting our Mouth of Tyne Aquathlon - awarded "North East Club Event of The Year 2019" - taking place in August 2021.

Endurance Running

This is a large section of our club with exceptional achievements weekly. Whether that be a massively fast time or more importantly, an individual achieving more than they expected regardless of the time. There are too many to mention here.



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Junior Tri

Junior Tri have been working hard throughout the pandemic to keep their junior athletes active and engaged through a variety of structured sessions throughout the week.

Coach, Steve Turner, said: "Our club's experience throughout the pandemic has been one of learning to adapt and focussing on what we are able to do rather than what we can't. No one could have foreseen what has happened over the last 12 months, so we were in a position where our coaches needed to learn new methods of engaging our juniors."

A snapshot of the team was captured here by British Triathlon <https://www.britishtriathlon.org/north-east/news/north-shield-poly-triathlon-club-keeping-juniors-engaged-through-lockdown-15102>

Stories of many achievements are on our website and Facebook pages. We are keen to celebrate these achievements, and subject to Covid-19 restrictions, we are hoping to hold a Prize and Presentation Night in October or November 2021.

We are sure our athletic achievements and accolades will continue throughout 2021 and beyond!



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Financial Report

Our AGM is also the time when we usually present our year end accounts to our members. We would encourage all of our members to have a look at the financial information within our most recent report, available via the Charity Commission website: <https://register-of-charities.charitycommission.gov.uk/charity-search/-/charity-details/5099089>. If you have any questions or comments, please don't hesitate to contact us.

Year End March 2020

The accounts filed (during the period of this report) with the Charity Commission, represent the Year to March 2020.

These accounts report a net surplus for the year of £21,367 following receipts of £89,291 and expenses of £67,924. Income was generated from a number of sources, with subscriptions, race entries, hire of facilities, and clothing sales being the primary routes.

The primary costs include the maintenance of the clubhouse and associated supplies, licencing fees, race costs and utilities.

Overall, the club finished the year in sound financial health with overall cash reserves of £92,945.

Year End March 2021

Whilst formal accounts have not yet been finalised, it can be confirmed that the club remains in sound financial health with headline out-turn figures as follows:

	March 2021	March 2020
Receipts	£41,136	£89,291
Payments	£33,267	£67,924
Net Surplus	£7,869	£21,367
Reserves	£100,816	£92,945

The club's finances have been significantly affected by the Covid pandemic, due largely to two factors.

Receipts are reduced due firstly to the enforced postponement of all organised events and secondly a reduction in membership subscriptions. The Trustees made the decision to reduce subscription costs to members by 25% both to reflect a reduction in the services the club were able to offer and to assist members, many of whom may be struggling financially during the pandemic.

The postponement of organised events also resulted a significant reduction in payments.



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Included within the receipts is just under £2,000 of fundraising, with headlines as follows:

May 2020 - awarded grant funding of £998 from Sport England Community Emergency Response Fund, towards irrecoverable costs incurred by the organisation during the pandemic.

November 2020 - awarded grant funding of £952 from Sport England Return to Play Fund, to support the reopening of the clubhouse (including our Covid Safety Screens), provide benches for outdoor use, and to contribute towards booking additional indoor training venues.

Ben Willcox

Treasurer



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Coaching

Coaching places huge responsibility on those who act in this position. Coaching athletes, but primarily you are coaching people. The discipline and skills that an athlete learns from their training are transferable into their everyday life. There will be days when coaches have had a bad day, but still they turn up and work with their athletic groups; their commitment and dedication is to be applauded.

Coaching at North Shields Poly is no different to the other voluntary sports groups that exist up and down the country. There are coaches at different levels of their coaching journey, some just starting out whilst others have been around for a while. They all have their own reasons for coaching and these may change over time, some still train and compete themselves, others have gone beyond their competition days.

What the last year has shown is the ability of our coaches to react and respond to the Covid pandemic and how they are able to continue to coach when the traditional sessions have not been possible. A number of coaches were able to create alternative sessions using the local environment that we have on the coast. Circuit sessions on the promenade, sand dune sprinting and interval training on the grass were all attacked with the same vigour and commitment as time on the track.

But then we were further restricted with who we could have contact with and the coaches' stepped up again. Session plans were prepared for many, one to one sessions took place, zoom sessions became the norm and we even had athletes doing specific discipline sessions with hurdles and a homemade shot circle in their gardens.

When UK Athletics were looking at how coaches had coached during the lockdown we were able to pass on many examples that illustrated that many athletes at the Poly were still being provided coaching by their coaches.

The last year has proven that whatever happens, our Club is well placed through its coaching capacity to continue to work with and develop athletes of all ages and abilities. Exciting and busy times lie ahead.

Bruce Robertson

Coaching Trustee



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Clubhouse Review

During the last year, the clubhouse has been closed due to Covid-19 restrictions for all but emergency access. However, activities to maintain and improve the clubhouse have continued in preparation for reopening and operating in a Covid-safe environment.

Works Completed

Over the course of the year, the Club has invested in:

- A new front door – the existing door was nearing the end of its lifespan and the new door is a higher specification and more secure.
- A new burglar alarm – the previous, broken, burglar alarm was replaced with a new system. It includes remote monitoring so we are aware of any activation immediately.
- New exterior signs – new signs were designed and installed to replace the two existing faded signs.
- New hob and cooker in the kitchen – the old hob and cooker had failed an electrical test.
- A new Public Announcement system, mainly for use during competition.

Routine maintenance has continued for all the services and equipment in the clubhouse, and the facility has been adapted to create a Covid-safe environment, with new plastic safety screens fitted in the shop area, and the installation of hand sanitizer dispensers and wipes in high usage areas. More frequent cleaning by our cleaners has also been implemented. Covid-19 has however meant the usual 'work afternoon' arrangements to involve members in carrying out tidying, repairs and improvements were not possible, so these have been on hold during the year.

During the year, ongoing checks and maintenance have continued to take place including:

- Annual gas boilers servicing
- Annual PAT testing
- Three-yearly fixed electrical installation testing
- Annual fire extinguisher servicing
- Six-monthly fire alarm and burglar alarm servicing

Although the clubhouse has recently received the go ahead to reopen, as at the time of this report a number of restrictions remain in place to keep us all safe during training and use of the building. The key points are as follows:

- Restricting numbers inside the clubhouse (so no gathering inside before or after training).
- A maximum of two people in each of the male/female toilet areas at any one time.
- Changing rooms, gym and showers remain out of use & masks to be worn in all areas.
- Use of hand sanitizer and wipes to clean key touch points after visiting the clubhouse.

We will continue to review our Covid-safe policies in line with Government guidance and advise of any updates in due course.

James Parkinson, Clubhouse Manager



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Track Report

Since our last report the track has now fully re-opened and the refurbishments carried out by North Tyneside Council have been largely completed. This includes achieving Track Mark national accreditation standards for the track all of its facilities. A new throws cage has been installed for throwing disciplines, and a new external fence and security gates have been fitted to secure the site.

The Track and Field facilities are now fully open both for training and competition and a number of events have already taken place, with more events planned throughout the summer.

The Council has also invested in new Track and Field equipment for competition including new javelins, shot puts, hammers and hurdles. These have been placed in the containers near the Council track entrance with a reorganisation of the storage facilities to create more space for both Council and Poly equipment.

Whilst the Council has invested in the new facilities, the Poly have also taken on new responsibilities as part of our licence agreement, with the aim maintaining the track to the high standards which have been achieved. These responsibilities includes grass cutting and keeping the track in good condition. All members are reminded to help in this task by removing any waste and litter you see around the site or clubhouse, and by using all equipment with care and consideration.

Apart from the Poly's exclusive use of the track (on Tuesday and Thursday evenings, and Sunday mornings), members of the public, as well as Poly athletes may also book a free hour session on the track, using the North Tyneside Council booking system (Clubspark) outside of those times.

In addition to Poly and public use, a number of third party clubs also have access to the Track and Field facilities. These are mainly local running clubs who book non-exclusive sessions on other evenings and weekends. Under the Poly's license arrangements with the Council, these bookings are made via the Poly, through the Clubhouse Manager. The income generated by the Poly from these third party bookings also helps to pay part of the costs mentioned above to maintain the track and facilities in good condition. And by sharing the track with other clubs, athletes and members of the public, the aims and objectives of both the Council and the Poly are achieved. Namely, to provide a community facility that is accessible to all.

Ongoing Works

Although the Track and Field facilities are now open and fully refurbished, a number of ongoing improvements and snagging items still require some attention and are being addressed by the Council and its contractors with input from Poly trustees and coaches. These include:

- Jump covers (for pole vault, high jump and long jump): the metal covers have proven cumbersome to remove and replace, so plans are in place to improve the surrounding paved areas to allow easier movement of the covers when the jumps are in use.
- Water jump: although the water jump is rarely used there are plans to improve the water supply to allow faster filling before events.
- Minor repairs and improvements: these are ongoing to several of the installed facilities.



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We are also reviewing the Club's own stock of Track and Field equipment (for example, hurdles, shot puts javelins etc.) which are used for coach-led training sessions. Some of this equipment may need additions and upgrades to satisfy our ongoing needs for athletes of all ages and at all standards and this will be part of a longer-term scheme of work.

Greg Penn, Track Manager



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North Shields Poly Events

Once again the Club's events have sadly been affected by the pandemic and this has led to the cancellation of the North Tyneside Trail 12k, the Pudding Run, the Ingram Fell Race and the postponement again of the Cookson 10k.

We are hopeful (if restrictions allow) that the Pudding Run will take place in December 2021 and the North Tyneside Trail 12k in January 2022. The Cookson 10k has once again been rescheduled and is due to take place in May 2022. The majority of entrants have rolled their entries over to the new date and any spare places will be made available once race preparations begin.

In some good news, the Mouth of Tyne Aquathlon is due to take place in August 2021 and to date has over 120 entries confirmed. The 4th of July will also see us hosting the official opening of our new track facility and hosting the first home meet of the Senior Track and Field League.

Initial enquiries have been made to look at the possibility of arranging the Club's annual awards night. We are hopeful this can be done later in 2021 at the Linksill Centre and a date in November is currently being considered.



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Membership and Club Shop

Membership

Loveadmin has been in full use for well over a year now and has made managing membership significantly easier for Graham Lewis-Dale and Susan Mole. Despite Covid-19 restrictions, we have seen a higher than usual increase in membership in both seniors and juniors. We now have 855 members which is 82 higher than the previous membership year, and an increase of around 50% in new members from 2020.

Of our total membership, 54% are male and 46% female, with members aged under 11 representing 4% of members, 23% aged 11-20, 35% seniors, 2% second claims, and 36% family memberships.

The trustees agreed to reduce membership fees by 25% due to Covid-19 and the uncertainty around ongoing restrictions to our activities. This will apply for members paying before 1st July 2021. From this point, membership fees will return to the standard pricing structure.

Club Shop

Unfortunately, due to the closure of the track and the clubhouse, there is little to report over the last year. Sales are significantly down because footfall has significantly reduced. All sales made were via our online shop and for the calendar year of 2020 we had a turnover of £1.5k compared to £4.5k in 2019. Our visits were significantly down too, with 2,000 visits compared to 5,118 the previous year. Significant new stock is due to arrive shortly for the ending of the lockdown period.

Graham Lewis-Dale
Membership & Retail



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Volunteers

All our volunteers have worked tirelessly to bring as much of their expertise as they can during this difficult year.

On a different slant, Mark Smith has begun regular podcast sessions with various topics and Poly guests on his show. We have all enjoyed listening and finding out more about the sporting exploits of our fellow club members.

Also of particular note, Graham Hall has been shortlisted for Coaching Hero in the UK Coaching Awards.

Club Captains

Junior

Road & Cross County: Gracie Davies & Benjamin Maley

Vice Captains: Jocelyn Black & Ben Scantlebury

Senior

Road: Natasha Newson, Clare Winter, Dave Stainthorpe & Roger Mosedale

Cross Country: Alison Smith & Jon Heaney

**Vice Captains Road,
Cross Country & Fell:** Helen Heaney & Huw Parry

Thank you to all our Club Captains.



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In summary:

These are exceptional times, and very challenging for the many athletics and sports clubs throughout the UK, but the careful day to day running of the club by our volunteers and the exceptional personal responsibility of our members hopefully means we will emerge from this in an excellent position for the future.

The Trustee Team, North Shields Poly 2021