Erme Valley Harriers

Chair's Annual Report 2026

Hello Erme Valley Harrier members. Thank you for taking the time to read my annual report.

Firstly, I'd like to thank the Committee for all of their efforts over the last year. A lot of work goes on unseen which allows the club to run smoothly, and I'm grateful to every one of them.

Some particular thanks: to Sharon and Ruth for organising the Christmas party and awards evenings (both senior and junior); Helen Chappell for running the Club Championship, which returned again in 2026 and continues to provide some friendly competition within the club; to Peter Allen, Ruth Terry and Emma Lake for finding runners and building teams for our relays; to Becky Lee for her help with cross country; and to Chris Prall and Neil Moffatt for organising our fell race. Outside the committee, thank you to Dave Fox for producing the Harrier every month, to Ken Summers for kit sales, and to Keith and Jayne for all the help with club membership, affiliations and everything else.

Finally, thank you all for coming along on club nights, for representing the club at races near and far, and for helping out at the three events we host. We are very grateful for your support every time we put one on.

Remembering Paul Ross

It was very sad to lose our former chairman Paul Ross in June. Paul was instrumental in setting up the Erme Valley Relays over 20 years ago, and was involved with many other local races. In recognition of his contribution to the club we are arranging for two perpetual shields in his name to be presented each year to the winning women's and men's teams at the next EVH relays.

Cross country

The 2025/26 season began with some great turnouts, including an unbelievably muddy Exeter, which doubled up as the County Championships and where we picked up a number of individual and team awards. The winter then took us to the SW Championships near Yeovil, a bracing Westward Ho!, a very wet Redruth and a very muddy Central Park (where we also provided plenty of marshals and officials).

The new season has started well. The first Westward League race at Newnham Park on 11th October was a new three-leg relay format, and we had around 40 members taking part along with a lot of officials and marshals. As I am now part of the Westward League organising team I hope you enjoyed it. Cross country is great training and a chance to try something different, and I would encourage everyone to give it a go.

Relays, track and field

Last December's Armada Christmas Relays saw 11 teams representing the club including a couple of junior teams, and our senior men retained their title. The summer relay season started with some great team and individual performances at our own relays, then continued with junior and senior teams at the Tavistock Town Relays and five full senior teams at the Torbay Relays. There were no prizes this time, but both were good club trips, and relays bring different groups from across the club together.

We have seen more people trying track and field. Our juniors turned out well at the Plymouth AC Mile Races and Spring Warm Up at Brickfields, with some excellent performances, as did several seniors trying the track for the first time. A strong junior group at the Devon County Track and Field Championships brought home lots of medals. The final South West Athletics League of the season at Exeter Arena saw us do well as part of the Armada composite team, with some members representing the team on the track for the first time. Do come along next season if you are interested; it is a very friendly atmosphere.

Our events

The Ivybridge 10k on 23rd May was a great evening with some great performances from our own members, including Luke winning the race overall. The feedback was very positive and we were able to donate to two local charities. As ever the 10k remains the foundation of our stable financial position.

The Erme Valley Relays on 26th June were another success. The senior men's team of Will Battershill, Nathan Brown, Matt Gilvear and Ben Holmes (three of whom joined the club as juniors) won the race and decimated the course record, with Will also taking a big chunk off the men's individual leg record. There were further wins for the V40 men, V60 men and V55 women, and the senior women finished second. Our fell race, the Ivybridge Three Tops, was held again in August as part of the Dartmoor Fell Series, thanks to Chris, Neil and our marshals. Chris is stepping down as Race Director after successfully establishing the race as a favourite amongst the local fell and off road running community. Neil has stepped forward to take over the role which the committee are supporting him with and we hope the wider club continue to get behind the race.

Club trips and socials

We supported the organisers of the Flete 10k in September, and it was like an Erme Valley Harrier take over, with a huge number of juniors and seniors taking part and helping with organisation and timing. We also had an excellent club trip to the Torbay Half Marathon and 10k, sharing a coach with Plymouth Musketeers, with about 30 members running. I am always keen to hear which races you would like us to attend as a club, so please do get in touch.

In April we held our junior presentation evening, which senior members were also welcome to join, and the Plymouth AC Mile Races counted towards this year's Club Championship.

We also have introduced two intra club 3k relays at Filham Park, thanks to Peter Allen for bringing this addition, both events were really successful and was great to see people across the club joining in for some friendly racing on a Tuesday night. If anybody has ideas for club sessions or events then please do get in touch with anybody on the committee, we're open to ideas!

Finances and club developments

Lynne has covered the finances in her report, so I won't go into detail but in summary we maintain nour strong financial position and we are pleased that we won't be putting up membership fees this year (despite the increase in affiliation costs to England Athletics).

This time last year, we introduced a couple of new things; firstly Spond which has generally been a success but only for the people who have downloaded it and engaged with it which isn't everybody! I would encourage people to use it as it is a very effective way for us to communicate with people and a good source f information. Secondly, we introduced team captains, I'd like to thank them again for their efforts and the support they have given me and the wider committee.

Looking ahead

The committee remains focused on ensuring that every decision reflects the club's mission to provide a friendly running community here in Ivybridge. We are an inclusive, member-led club, and if you have an idea for training sessions, social events, volunteering or ways we can give back to the local running community, please let us know.

In the coming months we have the rest of the cross country season, including Newquay on 15th November, and the Armada Christmas Relays on Sunday 13th December.

More widely, we are very keen that more people to lead or help lead club runs, we still need more people to come forward, particularly in the winter when it is important that nobody is left behind. We

have lots of people who know our club routes well, we are not expecting people to become qualified leaders, we're just looking for a bit of support on club night. Please also remember hi-viz on Tuesday nights, and to stop on the pavement before negotiating the entrance to the rugby club.

As mentioned last year, we are also looking for a couple of people to come forward and help with the organisation of the 10k and relays to take the load off myself and Keith a little bit. Anybody who is interested, please get in touch.

It has been good to see juniors out at track and field, cross country, the relays and the Flete 10k, and I would like to thank our junior coaches and parents for the great training environment they provide.

Thank you again for reading and I look forward to a successful year with the club in 2027.

Tom Davies