

Civil Service Athletic Association

ANNUAL REPORT 2022

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2022 was a year that witnessed events that had been disrupted by the global pandemic gradually returning to the athletics calendar, though in some instances numbers mirrored those elsewhere with some athletes either reluctant to travel and compete or had been lost to the sport altogether.

This then was a challenging year for CSAA as it strived to re-introduce events that had been cancelled, in some instances, for two years. Serious discussions were held regarding the planned programme and whether numbers competing would be sufficient for an event to go ahead.

The Road Relays were not held in early 2022 as there was still some nervousness about travelling into London, but all the other events took place as normal and thanks go to CSSC staff for their continued support and assistance in the Track & Field, 10k and Cross Country.

Interestingly some of the actions undertaken by CSAA align with the document recently published by CSSC - "*Sport & Physical Activity Improvement Plan*" - and reference is made to this in various places in the Annual Report.

2 Events During 2022

The Men's Sir Sefton Brancker Cross Country Match against the RAF dates back to 30th January 1929 and has seen many Great Britain Internationals competing for both teams. The 2022 fixture took place in January at RAF Halton. Whilst the Civil Service struggled to find a team the RAF had no such issues and regained the Trophy from the CSAA. In the Women's SEAX Trophy, which was introduced in 1987, only 3 Civil Servants could make the journey which meant that the RAF won the Trophy back. Thanks go to CSAA Team Managers Ian Statter and Claire Cameron in what were still difficult times with the lingering effects of Covid.

In May the 10k Championships and 5k Run moved back to Battersea Park and although a hot day the event went well and just about everyone who attended was glad to see the resumption of CSAA events and catching up with friends and colleagues. The last 10k was 2019 with 180 competitors so how pleasing to see 197 runners finishing with times ranging from 31 minutes to 80 minutes and ages ranging from 18 to 70+ and over 20 Departments represented. This certainly meets one of the five targets in the CSSC Sport & Physical Activity Improvement Plan.

June saw the Half Marathon Championships held within the popular Freckleton Half Marathon in



Lancashire on a Sunday afternoon. However, numbers were low due to injury, illness and a lack of funding for athletes as Departments cut back on expenses. In the end only 8 athletes competed from three

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Departments but all said they would return as this was one of the events that was under threat. It has been decided to continue in 2023 and hope that more CSSC runners take up the challenge, especially from the North West, to meet another CSSC priority of *“growing and sustaining participation”*.

In August in the midst of a heat wave the Open & Masters Track & Field Championship was held at Nuneaton along with the Police Championships, thus achieving another CSSC Priority of *“Increasing Collaborations and Partnerships”*. Despite the heat the day went well though once again numbers were lower than expected for one reason or another. The officials were of the highest standard with many being highly graded by England Athletics, which again meets a CSSC Challenge of *“Partnerships with External Organisations”* Thanks go to Gaye Clarke & Bob Brimage for all their hard work in arranging the event and to all the CSSC staff who turned out to assist with the running of the event.

Late September saw the 100 Anniversary of the first ever CSAA Race Walk held in 1922. Once again, the event was hosted by the Police Sports Association at Cannon Hill Park, Birmingham which included the historic Ryan Cup Match. The race was unusual in that the winner was eligible to compete in both Championships but elected to represent the Police in the Ryan Cup. Nevertheless, CSAA retained the historic Trophy first presented in 1958 though the first Match was in 1955. Yet again numbers taking part were less than 25 across Men & Women but more worryingly is how old most of the competitors are now with very few younger walkers now taking part. This is one event that faces a challenge of increased participation on 2023.



In October the Cross Country Championships were held over the challenging Parliament Hill Course in London. For cross country the ground should be soft and muddy but after the long dry summer the ground was bone dry, rock hard and riven with cracks which were an issue for the organisers and runners alike. Fortunately, everyone arrived back without injury and with 72 finishers numbers were on a par with 2019. With about a dozen Departments represented the challenge for 2023 is to encourage runners from more Departments to participate as it is good for *“Physical and Mental Wellbeing”* as well as *“Individual development”*,

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3 The CSAA History

This is now complete as far as possible, though appeals for missing information have been made, and the occasional snippet of information is gratefully received. The History now tracks all the winners of CSAA Championships from 1864 to the present day and sections include contemporary Newspaper Reports from 1864 up until Athletic Reports in the Twenty-first Century, CSAA Officers and Committee Members, along with pen pictures of some of the Internationals who have competed in Championship events.

4 The CSAA Committee

The CSAA is an elected body and the Committee has met quite a few times during 2022 via the medium of Zoom which has worked very well. The AGM is usually held in January to which all members are welcome to attend though it is recognised that this is not always possible. If anyone would like to serve as an elected Member on the Committee you are most welcome. Also, for anyone who is genuinely interested in assisting at any of the events, without the responsibility of becoming a Committee Member, they are equally welcome as a willing volunteer. If anyone wishes to discover more about what is involved or offer their services for a particular event then please contact the Secretary or a member of the Committee for more information. Volunteers remain the lifeblood of the sport and CSAA will welcome anyone who lives locally and wishes to assist at any event. For example, this might involve timekeeping, number recording, course marshalling, officiating, handing out race numbers, course marking etc and would assist the Committee in so many ways and continue to maintain the high quality that athletes currently enjoy when participating.

The elected Committee for 2022, with the Meeting held in January, was as follows:

President	Marian Holmes OBE
Chairman:	Ian Statter
Secretary:	Nick Hume
Treasurer:	Paula Booth
Life Vice Presidents:	Bill Berry, Brian Craig, Dave Evans, John Hall, Neil Hornsby, Nick Hume, Bill Kingston, Roger Smith, Gerry Trainer, Ted Wingrove
Committee:	Bob Brimage, Claire Cameron, Gaye Clarke, Michaela Dempsey, Steve Hallas, Grete Howarth, Jason Holt, Steve Norris, Dan Summers, Ros Townsend-Hope, Steve Uttley, Tim Wright
Accounts Examiner:	J Dransfield

Within the Committee there is a wide range of knowledge and experience that covers all aspects of the athletics spectrum. A number of the Committee Members also serve in volunteer capacities from national to local level for Clubs, Counties and National Associations and/or are qualified Coaches, and/or Officials thus bringing increased expertise to the organisation of CSAA events. This also enables good working relationships with organisations such as England Athletics and UK Athletics if the need arises and thereby fulfils another of the aims of the CSSC Sport Plan of improving “Partnerships”.

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5 Final Round-Up

Already CSAA are planning ahead for 2023 in the hope that the earlier events are announced the more time it gives participants a chance to book it in their calendars. New ideas for the events have been considered such as a Trail Run Championships, and a 10 mile Championships with the Police. The Trail Race might be trialled in the North West in September 2023 whilst the 10 miler had to be discounted because of accessibility issues with locations used by the Police.

It is hoped that the 10k and 5k Fun Run can be linked with the Kings Coronation and held in the following week in London's Battersea Park in May with CSAA & CSSC continuing to work closely in "partnership and collaboration, to enhance physical and mental wellbeing and providing an individual challenge" at the same.

Nick Hume CSAA General Secretary December 2022