



CHAIRMANS REPORT 2024-2025

The AGM inevitably brings some change, and following last year's meeting we welcomed Sue Richmond (Pennine Fell Runners) as Senior Championships Co Ordinator and Liaison officer to other Athletic Bodies, Caroline Lambert (Keswick AC) and Doni Clark (Todmorden Harriers) as Membership Representatives. Thank you very much to all outgoing officers but particularly to Nicky Spinks and Charmian Heaton for their 10 years committee service.

Membership continues to grow, with a manageable annual increase, we currently sit at 9,556 active members (9,397 this time last year).

The FRA accounts for 2024-25 are in very good shape. Simon Long and I continue to review the Capital and Operating budgets on a regular basis and can confirm there will be no increase in membership subscriptions for 2026. The membership income aligns to the growth in membership, a noticeable increase in magazine advert income, reflecting the quality of the publication and a reduction in outlay for the First Aid courses, due to the partnership agreement with Will4 Adventure. Where we did have some increase in expenditure was mainly due to assisting in supporting our Juniors, which is important for the future of our sport.

With our IT, this year we have benefited from the move to the Microsoft 365 platform which is proving to provide great overall improvements in efficient working practice and documentation control for the committee. We now shift our focus to enhance the website and prepare for future plans such as displaying SMOTS, the digital magazine, live on the day senior championship results and archive material.

Coaching and Training courses continue to be very well supported. The CiRF FHTM (Fell/Hill/Trail/Mountain) module is somewhat delayed and is now scheduled for a pilot in April 2026. We continue to work closely with UKA on this course development.

Access remains a major concern for the future of fell racing; to mitigate this we continue to work closely with Natural England, United Utilities, Forestry Commission and the Natural Trust.

Environmental Issues, a climate change sub-group has been set up, in collaboration with the WFRA. This is particularly relevant to all of us run in the fells with recent high temperatures, storms causing flooding, lightning and wildfires. We look forward to receiving the outcome of this group in 2026.

Races, with 500+ fixtures our focus remains to ensure we support the 300+ Race Organisers for fair and safe running through the Safety, Equipment and Rules sub-committee.

Senior and Junior Championships, another successful year of racing. The use of SI Entries and Crazy legs respectively has proven to improve efficiency in race entry, timing and results for both series of races.

Governance, it has been clear when stressing and questioning policy over the past few years that the “Articles of Association” and “Disciplinary Process” do not align with out current working practices and are not fit for purpose and will be fully reviewed in 2026.

As you will have noticed I have offered to stand for another year, hopefully we will have a nomination that will be willing to stand for Chair at AGM 2026.

Stuart Ferguson
Chairman
The Fell Runners Association