

Falkirk Victoria Harriers Club Together Officer Post

The Falkirk Victoria Harriers post is arguably the most successful Club Together project in Scotland due to not only the considerable increase in volunteers and membership at the club but more impressively the restructuring behind the scenes to professionalise their systems, processes and coaching structure. This is a unified club developing a thriving environment to nurture talented athletes and develop, support and mentor enthusiastic coaches and volunteers. What makes this project stand out is the transparency of the club together officers work and the backing of the parents, committee, volunteers and athletes to make it a success.

Output from June 2012 – Present

Harry Baird – Club Together Officer (15 hours per week)

Key Priority Areas for CTO post 2012-2013

- Volunteer Recruitment
- Coach Recruitment & Development
- Athlete Development

Quantitative Outputs - highlights

Club Membership

- 75 new members recruited and retained since June 2012
- Current total of 192 club members (baseline – 117 members)
- Membership Increase = 61%

Volunteer Recruitment

- 29 new volunteers recruited
- 26 new volunteers retained at the club (not including officials)
- 16 of these volunteers are coaches
- Other volunteer roles include: press/communications officer, nutritionist, database project leader, inclusion officer and for admin
- 90% Retention Rate of volunteers
- 9 new officials recruited

Coach Development

- 20 CPD opportunities attended by existing coaches
- 14 UKA Qualifications achieved by new and existing coaches (inc. Athletics Leaders, Coaching Assistant and Coach Award)

Qualitative Outputs - highlights

- FVH achieved the Podium Award for Accreditation (highest achievement)
- Working towards strengthening and restructuring of club coaching structure
- Appointment of Coaching Co-ordinators by Age Groups to aid cohesion in the coaching pathway, encourage sharing good practice and to give more support/guidance to new coaches
- Developing individualised CPD plans for coaches – phase 1 underway, all new coaching assistants completing questionnaires to help identify appropriate training opportunities
- Mentoring programme developed to up-skill and support new coaches, also devised to address weaknesses or lack of expertise in identified disciplines

- “Athlete Standards” database development – complex database set up to aid team selection, encourage athletes to compete, send athlete performance reports to coaches and provide evidence to steer areas for development (identify disciplines where athletes are failing to meet standards)
- Encouraging athletes to compete – committee now have a system where all members attendance at competitions are recorded, letters are also sent home when athletes stop training to encourage those with injuries or change in circumstance to retain their membership, also a way of identifying how they can do better as a club
- Relationship building – since in post relationships have greatly improved with Grangemouth Stadium staff, any conflict between coaches/staff has eased drastically allowing for clearer pathways from RJT to the club and promoting better communication over facility access
- Stronger links with School and community programmes – since in post Harry has been working closely with the Active Schools team and neighbouring high schools to promote athletics participation and volunteering/coach education opportunities for senior pupils
- Clear pathway for Forth Valley Flyers athletes to access training with the Falkirk Victoria Harrier with the aid of appointed FVH Inclusion Officer

Forth Valley Flyers Additional Project

- **Scottish**athletics have committed funds for Harry Baird to work with Forth Valley Flyers over the next 3 years adding an additional 6 hours to the post (21 hours total)
- This would support additional hours until August 2016
- Forth Valley Flyers support the project 100% and have identified volunteer recruitment and strengthening club structures (for e.g. committee) as a priority

Priorities 2013-14

- Link to new RJT classes rolled out by Fiona (FCT)
- Enhance links with neighbouring athletic clubs, focusing on existing partnerships (FVAP/TFV)
- Up-skilling of the following: Parent Helpers (Coaching), Assistant Coaches, L2 Coaches and other key volunteers
- Recruit to fill spaces created by up-skilling
- Focus on links with High Schools
- Increase participation (competition)