

Your Committee/other positions:

Jim Whittaker, President  
Graeme Littlewood, Secretary  
Simon Jones, Treasurer  
Helen Roden, Juniors  
John Ward, Membership  
Tony Bastin, Website  
Alex Kilcoyne, Ladies Captain  
Ross Armstrong, Mens Captain  
Flick Jackson, Social  
Ordinary Members: Gill Nesbitt,  
Martin Jones (Grand Prix), Adam  
Ellis, Dave Jackson, Jasmine Salih  
Mark Hetherington (Head Coach)

[www.abbeyrunners.co.uk](http://www.abbeyrunners.co.uk)

Dear Abbeys!

What a brilliant last few weeks of running. First of all, well done to everybody (all 84 of you!) who took part in our Abbey Virtual Relay. Over half of our members! I think that could have been our best ever club event turnout. The team spirit was tremendous, and it was wonderful to see so many of our Juniors take part too. Congratulations to the winning team, Follow the Run-bow. It was a nail-biting finish right to the end! Thank you to Ross and Alex for organising such a top event.

I have been in awe of how many of you have continued your impressive dedication to your running and training. We are all missing our Tuesday and Thursday sessions together, the racing, the parkruns, the Abbey cafe and of course the companionship that comes with being able to run together. But thanks to initiatives like the Virtual Relay and Street Tagging we can keep connected as a club and in many ways get closer together.

As you will see on page 3, our membership continues to grow despite the suspension of our training sessions, which is fantastic. I wanted to extend a particular welcome (back!) to Rang Smith, who first joined Abbey Runners back in our first year (1984)!! Rang ran in Ian Patchett's group at the time, and they've stayed good mates ever since. We look forward to running with you, Rang!

Stay safe, everyone, and keep Abbey Running!!

*Jim*



**Congratulations** to our (three!) Runners of the Month for April and May: **Stephen Greene** (April), **Sophie Brady** (May/Juniors) and **Andrea Cobo Ibanez** (May/Seniors).

Stephen was nominated for his brilliant Street Tagging idea (plus he's a pretty darn good runner too!), which has kept us all connected and running during this difficult time. Sophie attracted multiple nominations from several Abbeys, for being our Abbey Chalk Bandit, joining in with the senior activities during lockdown in her own way and cheering up many senior Abbeys by targeting their street. She showed true Abbey grit during her relay run and (we're told!) channelling inner inspiration from Andrea!!! Speaking of whom, Andrea was nominated for being really busy completing virtual races, posting positive messages to Abbeys and being an inspiring and inspired member of Abbey. Her continuing commitment to the club, encouraging other club members and her unwavering positive attitude has been particularly appreciated over the lockdown period.

**Our other top quality nominees for Apr/May were:** Tom Rogerson, Alex Richards, Jim Whittaker, Scott Macdonald, Faye Mullen, Ross Armstrong, Duncan Clark, Sunny Cheema and David Leslie.

# Abbey spotlight on....

Simon Jones

## 1. When did you join Abbey Runners?

I think it was around February 2016. I joined the same week as Craig Kent who is still a keen Abbey as well. I'm actually struggling to remember the exact time as it feels like I've been in the club forever.

## 2. Why did you join us?

I used to run a lot at school but stopped for a few years (until I met Laura). I ran the Abbey Dash the previous November in about 45 minutes and felt awful but I got the running bug back again and I haven't looked back.

## 3. What is your favourite running distance race?

My favourite races are trails races of around 10-15 miles, especially in scenic places that I don't know very well. Usually involves around 1-2 hours of running so plenty of time to enjoy myself and see somewhere new.

## 4. What is your greatest running achievement(s)?

I have actually managed to win a couple of races, but I think my greatest running achievement was coming 3rd at the Bluebell Trail 10m a couple of years ago. It's a super tough local race. It was a hot day but I felt that I ran it really well and it's a great course.

## 5. What is your greatest running disaster?

Probably turning up at the Temple Newsam Ten in January without any running shoes. I was luckily able to borrow a very similar pair from President Jim which saved the day. [can I claim your time as my new PB? - Jim]

## 6. Which is your favourite race in the running calendar?

I'm a big fan of the Calderdale Way Relay. Very hilly legs of around 8-10 miles and a great atmosphere. Also a big fan of the Chevin Chase after running it for the first time on Boxing day 2019.

## 7. Which is your most memorable Abbey event (club trip, party, etc)?

I really enjoyed my first club trip, the Grasmere Gallop, a few years ago. It was a lovely day in the lake district with a nice small race followed by some food and beer.

## 8. What are your running goals for the next 12 months?

I'm entered in my first marathon in October which will hopefully go ahead. It's called the Dramathon and runs around the Speyside whiskey distilleries (although the whisky sampling is saved until after). With every other race I've entered being cancelled it should give me some good time to prepare I hope.

## 9. What does your typical week's training look like? (pre-Covid!)

Before the lockdown I had got into a good rhythm of running around 30-40 miles a week and going to Thursday speed sessions. I was definitely feeling the benefit of the Thursday sessions so missing them at the minute. I always try and do a bit of gym and swimming as well so usually fairly busy in the week.

## 10. What drives you? How do you keep yourself motivated?

I just really enjoy being out, especially running with friends. I'm actually not great at getting out running on my own unless I've got a clear goal so I always try and have a clear idea of what I want to do before I go out.



Each month, we pick on an unsuspecting Abbey to reveal their running aspirations, personal targets and darkest running secrets! Look out! Next time it could be you!!

**A big Abbey welcome to our new joiners!!**

It's great that, despite the lockdown and the suspension of our club training sessions, our membership continues to grow!!  
Meet a few of our new joiners...

I started running late '83 when I saw an advert for the Leeds Marathon, which I promptly entered and ran 5/6 weeks later, running 90 mins at halfway, fading to 3.35! Though very sore and stiff for a week, I fell in love with running.

I joined Abbey sometime early '84. Although I lived a fair way away, I was lucky because I used to get a lift there every week from a local member called Trevor. In the early days I remember Chris Wicks, Richard Dixon and of course Ian Patchett who became a great friend. We soon had a good group going, just a lovely mix of people. I knew Duncan Clark from the races I ran and I also remember Hetta Morath.

I remember one of the first team events we did, a relay at Harrogate on the Stray. On the first leg we had a young lad called Bob who promptly hit the front for the first lap; we roared him on. He did fade to about 20th but we all ran our hearts out that day. Although we finished down the field we had a tremendous day out.

I really enjoyed my time at Abbey Runners. I left because of work and finding it hard to get to training and races. I joined Pudsey & Bramley AC who were just up the road from me.

I drifted away from running in the early 90's with PBs of 5km (16.30), 10k (34 mins), half marathon (75.00) and got involved with bodybuilding, then martial arts and boxing for many years.

Then about 6 months ago, I thought about getting back to running, and started my "back to running after 30 years" program! I am 14 weeks into training, have a UKA coach on board and back were it all started with Abbey Runners and couldn't be happier!

I rejoined Abbey because I probably had my happiest memories there and they're a great club. I'm 57 now and hope to get back to a decent standard and I'm so pleased to see Abbey Runners still has a lovely homely feel and a bit of class!  
**Rang**

**WELCOME BACK...  
RANG SMITH**  
...after over 30 years!!



Recent joiners **Tom Bysouth** and **Shauna Corrigan** also ran the Virtual Relay in their sparkling new Abbey vests! (see p8)



Welcome, **Paul Craven!** (Paul's not on FB, but is on Strava if you fancy connecting!)



**Josh Graham**

Josh managed to train for a few weeks with the Yellow Group just before lockdown, so it was great to meet him.

He also ran for #kissmyasphalt in the Abbey Virtual Relay, running a fantastic distance of 4.7km (and it wasn't even downhill!).



# Abbey Virtual Relay

The premise was simple, a virtual relay where each leg was 20 mins continuous running and had to be completed in one calendar day with the distance recorded. Carefully planned downhill routes were encouraged, so as to rack up the maximum distance possible. One route became so popular and home to numerous downhill 5 km PB's it deservedly became an official route - the Cookridge Flyer. Runners were also required to carry a baton — the more inventive the better. Teams were made up of 12 runners and thus the relay would be 12 days in total. The team who covered the furthest distance would be crowned the winner.

Little did we know how exciting it was going to be, nor how many people would take part! When 84 of you signed up, Ross and I had no clue as to what an adventure this was going to be!

So the teams, we had 7 teams of 12 runners:

1. **Easier said than Run**
2. **Follow the Run-bow**
3. **Kiss my Asphalt**
4. **Pronation Nation**
5. **Scrambled Legs**
6. **Chafing the Dream**
7. **Mind over Miles**



The teams were drawn at random with names pulled out of an Abbey bobble hat. Before we knew it, the first runners were off and the race began! Right from the word go, the support, friendly competition and camaraderie were fantastic. Each day, Ross and I would post a graph and the top three teams, until the final day where we made everyone wait for the final positions in a video.



Continued...

# Abbey Virtual Relay (cont.)

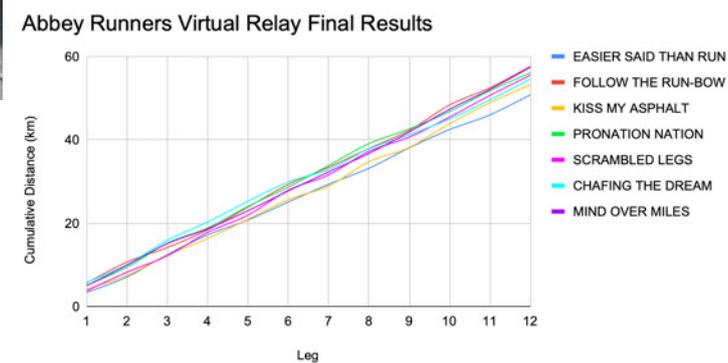
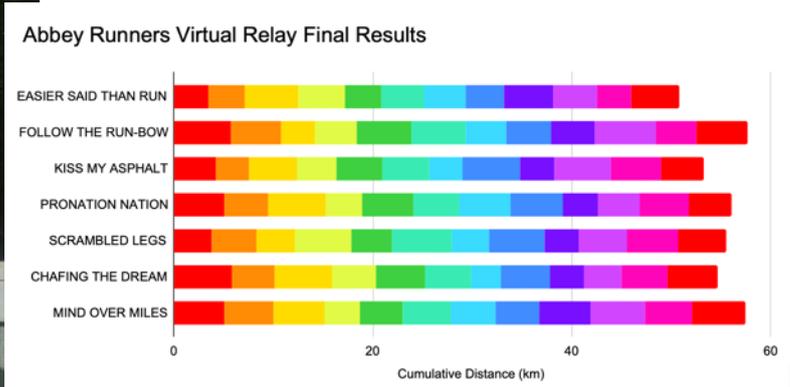
All together we ran a grand total of 385.29 km (that's 239.41 miles). The winning team was **Follow the Run-bow**, 2<sup>nd</sup> was **Mind over Miles**, a mere 210m behind 1<sup>st</sup> place. Finally, taking the bronze position was **Pronation Nation**. Throughout the 12 days the closeness of the teams was incredible, with the lead changing numerous times. The final day was the equivalent of a photo finish!

The final results are shown below:

Position	Team	Distance (km)	Distance from 1 <sup>st</sup> place (km)
1 <sup>st</sup>	Follow the Run-bow	57.64	
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Mind over Miles	57.43	0.21
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Pronation Nation	56.09	1.55
4 <sup>th</sup>	Scrambled Legs	55.51	2.13
5 <sup>th</sup>	Chafing the Dream	54.6	3.04
6 <sup>th</sup>	Kiss my Asphalt	53.2	4.44
7 <sup>th</sup>	Easier said than Run	50.82	6.82



Matt Ellis bringing it home for Follow the Run-bow, an exciting run off against Sunny Cheema!



Continued....

# Abbey Virtual Relay (cont.)

Congratulations to all the runners in the Follow the run-bow team: **Ed Newbould, Ali Almeri, John Ackroyd, David Leslie, Alex Richards, Ged O'Donnell, Fiona Holmes, Graham Littlewood, Mike Smith, Liam Jenkins, Jane Oughton and Matt Ellis.**

Ross and I also did a series of prizes to highlight a few of the excellent achievements during the virtual relay.

Individual distance awards

Furthest run (male)  
Liam Jenkins (6.07km)



Furthest run (female)  
Alex Richards (5.46km)



Furthest run (vet female)  
Lisa Stansbie (5.11km)



Furthest run (vet male)  
Stephen Greene (5.83km)



Furthest run (super vet male)  
John Ward (4.75km)



Furthest run (super vet female)  
Jane Oughton (4.12km)

Continued...

# Abbey Virtual Relay (cont.)

Baton awards!!



**Best homemade baton:**

Stella Jones's NHS baton  
(modelled by Martin Jones)

An appropriate nod to all of our wonderful NHS staff.



**The Extra Mile award:**

Alfie Hickman & Thomas Hetherington

These two young lads had to run their leg twice, what a brilliant and determined effort!

**Best 'Abbey' baton:**

Cathy Littlewood's Olympic Torch  
Tokyo 2020? Well we had Abbey 2020.



**Mid-summer Murders award:**

Simon Jones

Brave man to run down the street with a spade in hand 'painted' with red paint!



**The Usain Bolt sponsored Fastest Starter:**

Laurence Lennon  
We forgot to announce this one in our video. Laurence was so fast out the starting blocks he even started a day early!



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# Abbey Virtual Relay (cont.)

More awards!!

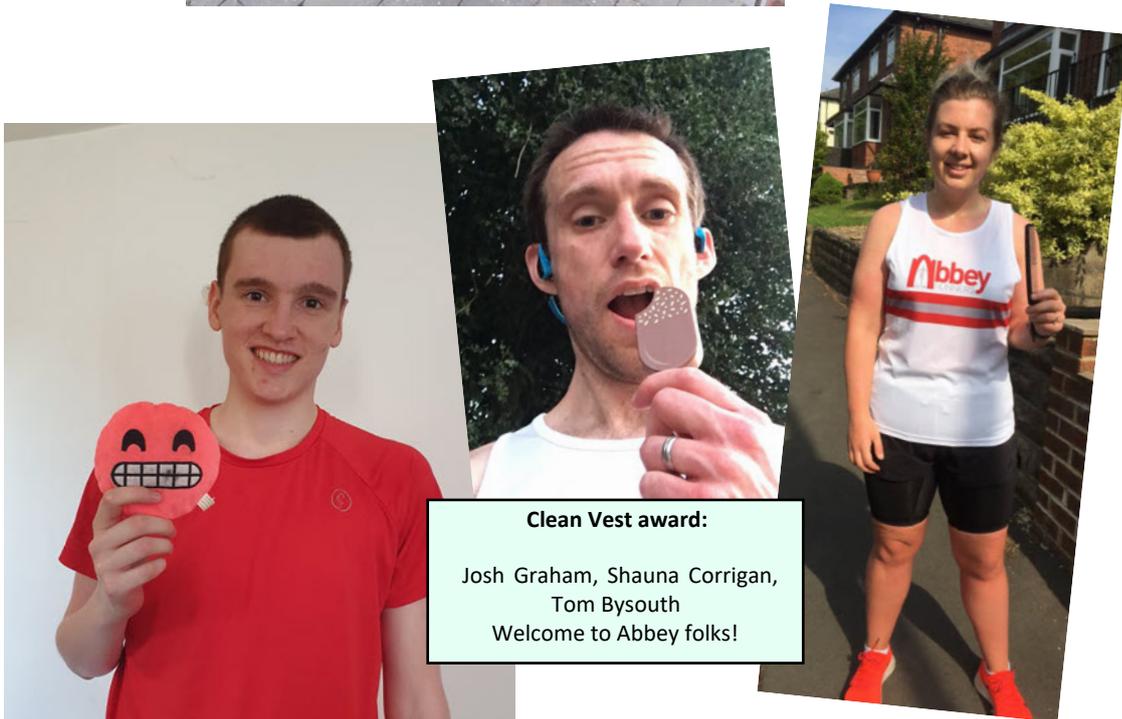
## Family clean sweep award:

Holmes family - Matt, Fiona and Callum  
All three achieved PB's and had wonderful homemade batons



## Clean Vest award:

Josh Graham, Shauna Corrigan,  
Tom Bysouth  
Welcome to Abbey folks!



There have been at least 15 PBs, from the 1 mile to the 5 km - all of them represent significant achievements to be celebrated, so well done every one of you! Also thanks and a huge 'well done' to all the Juniors that took part - from the 'chalk bandit' to the wonderful homemade batons - we've absolutely loved having the Juniors as part of the competition.

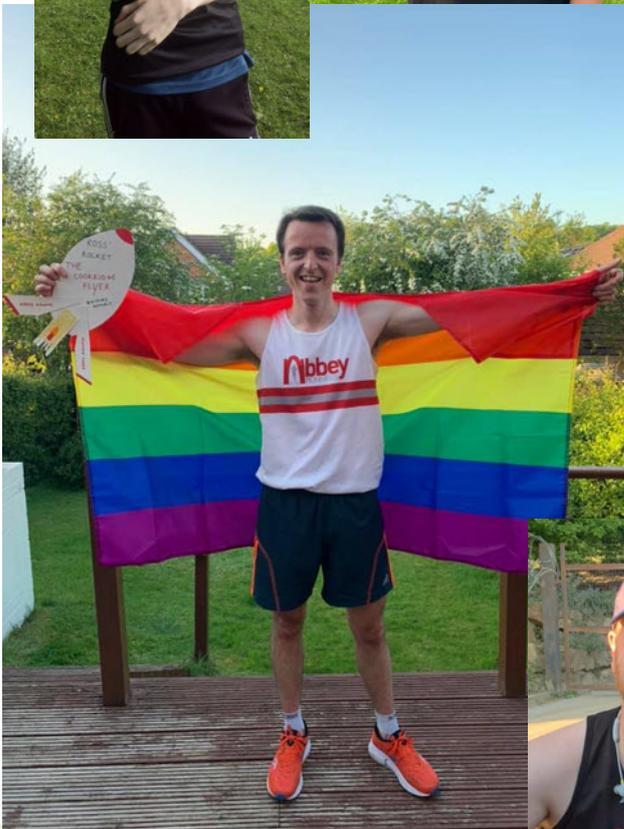
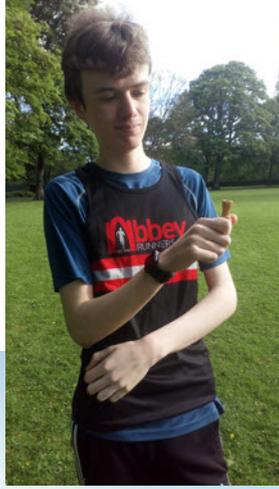
Thank you to everyone who took part and supported the virtual relay. It may not have made up for various postponed and cancelled races that we had all entered, but the team spirit was something special. We certainly had a blast!

Happy running!

**Alex and Ross**

# Abbey Virtual Relay (cont.)

Well done, everyone!!



# Race Report: Lightwater Challenge 10k - 8th March

## by Andrea

What to say about this race? I entered so long ago, in January, when I was trying to fit all the races into my marathon training plan (we better don't talk about the marathon). I entered for two reasons: first one, it was a counting race for the Abbey Runners Grand Prix (not for nothing I was awarded as the most competitive Abbey Runner in 2019 hahaha!); the second one, due to its location, Lightwater Valley, I was always curious about, as I passed by many times on my way to Fountains Abbey parkrun or some Saturdays (after parkrun) when I used to go for a meal to Ripon with Harry. So it was definitely a must!

It was a great race! Actually, my last one before the lockdown unfortunately, but at least a good one to say goodbye to the racing season for a while.

I had some serious doubts about my performance that day, as the previous Sunday I run 32 km ish with Andy and Sunny, followed by a week full of runs including speed session on Thursday, another 25km with Ali, John and Tony on Friday and my run with Faye to WHM parkrun on Saturday (plus parkrun of course, the last one as well). We both felt so broken, that's why we went for a nice breakfast to LS6 instead of running back to hers (but we walked a long way while waiting for our bus hahaha, it was such a good morning). Anyway, the thing is we didn't run back because I had the Ripon 10K race the following day and my legs were so tight already on Saturday.



Seriously, I don't know where I got my energy from that morning. Since the beginning I was 1<sup>st</sup> lady, and that was all the time in my mind, I was telling to myself every second, "you are the 1<sup>st</sup> one, you have to keep it, you can't slow down, just keep it up". It wasn't only me, also marshals were telling it to me as I passed by, and also Duncan did, when I overtook him, **YES I DID, I OVERTOOK HIM IN THE 5<sup>TH</sup> KM**, hahahaha!!!

continued overleaf...

Continued...

# Race Report: Lightwater Challenge 10k - 8th March

## by Andrea (cont.)

In fact, I had two things in mind, the other one was the “W”. I read in the race’s description that there were 2 uphill segments, one after another, that’s why it was called the “W”. So anytime we were going uphill, I was asking myself, “Is this one the first hill?” I needed to save myself for the “W”, so I didn’t want to risk.

Anyway, back to the fact of “leading the race”, I don’t know how or from where did appear another lady, just after passing Duncan and Harry, that was like a slap in my face, “now I have to run even faster, now that I’m already so tired”. We fought hard during more than 3k, I was passing her on the uphill and she was overtaking me downhill (I don’t know when my weakness became my strength, but now looks like I overtake people when going up, I’m crazy, I know, that might explain many things).

At some point I realized I couldn’t keep up with her and the distance became longer, so at the 8<sup>th</sup> and a bit she was like 300m in front of me and I knew I couldn’t catch her anymore, so I just kept running to finish 2<sup>nd</sup> lady, as close to her as I could (20 sec difference, 43’43” for me, 27<sup>th</sup> overall, 2<sup>nd</sup> lady, 1<sup>st</sup> senior). What was my surprise that Duncan overtook me just at the finish line (well I wasn’t surprised tbh, he always does). I knew he would do it, as I could hear his strides behind me all the time, he has a peculiar way of stepping so is quite easy to know that it is him. Anyway, Duncan, you just got me for 1 sec, the second that I will never forget. Thanks for your support during the race and always, you are a model for all of us, kind of myth, the Abbey legend.



Above:  
Duncan sneaks past Andrea just before the finish line.....the rascal!!

Left:  
Paul looking far too happy as he cruises to the finish!

Continued....

# Race Report: Lightwater Challenge 10k - 8th March

## by Andrea (cont.)



Scott powering to the finish!



Thomas Hetherington ran the 3k Challenge!

Pos.	Name	Net Time	Gun Time	
25	Duncan Clark	43:42	43:42	🔗
27	Andrea Cobo	43:43	43:44	🔗
33	Scott Macdonald	44:38	44:42	🔗
42	Ali Ameri	46:12	46:16	🔗
50	James Whittaker	46:56	47:01	🔗
67	Howard Cohen	49:00	49:05	🔗
95	Paul Greene	52:18	52:24	🔗
108	Adam Ellis	54:08	54:14	🔗
123	Peter Badkin	55:50	55:57	🔗
136	Alastair White	57:03	57:09	🔗
151	Liz Willis	58:04	58:12	🔗



Andrea with her 2nd Lady Finisher Trophy

I enjoyed this race so much, and of course, I enjoyed the fact that I shared this experience with many Abbeyes, not as many as in the PECO races though, but we were quite a few (Ali, Scott, Jim, Liz...), and there were really good performances, not sure, but even some PBs (not me). Honestly, I can't say anything about the scenery, as although the organizer described as "a lush and scenic route with amazing view points" I couldn't really spend not even a sec to appreciate it.

I highly recommend this race for next year, just saying ;)

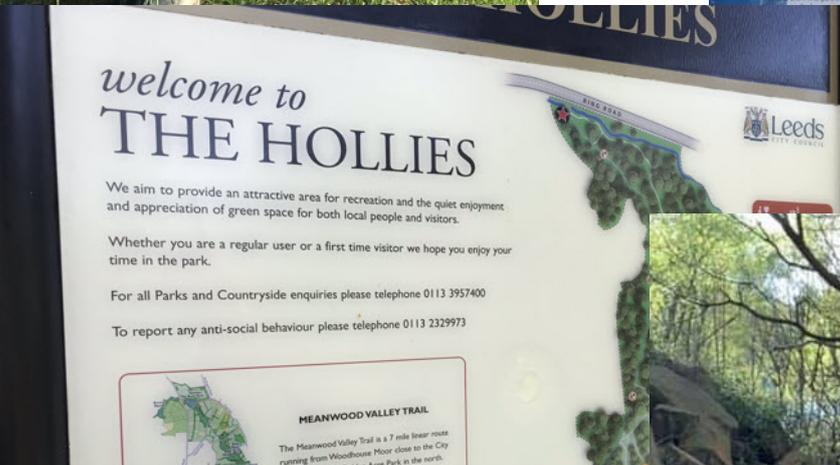
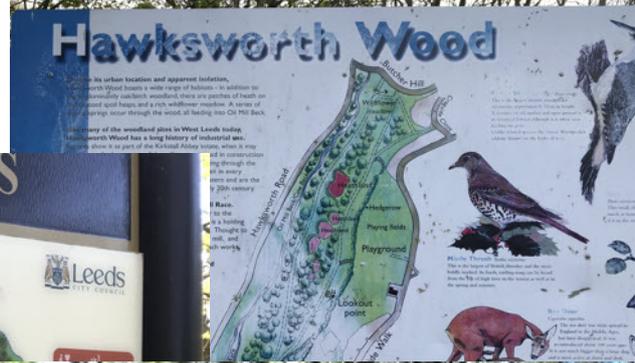
*Andrea Cobo Ibanez*

# President's Challenge

I had this idea when Liz and I were running through the Meanwood Valley Trail one day. I realised just how many amazing lovely paths and trails there are around North Leeds, many of which I hadn't really discovered until I had lived in Leeds for several years. In fact, it wasn't until I joined Abbey Runners in 2007 that I really got to know of them (mainly thanks to Lisa Hulme-Vickerstaff who used to lead my Tuesday night group).

So I thought this would be a great way to encourage Abbeys to discover new routes around Leeds that they wouldn't otherwise know about. Plus it would be a bit of fun!

So I did the first three and then passed the next three onto some of the winners, and fantastic that I then got to learn of new routes myself! (never knew about Gledhow Lake...)

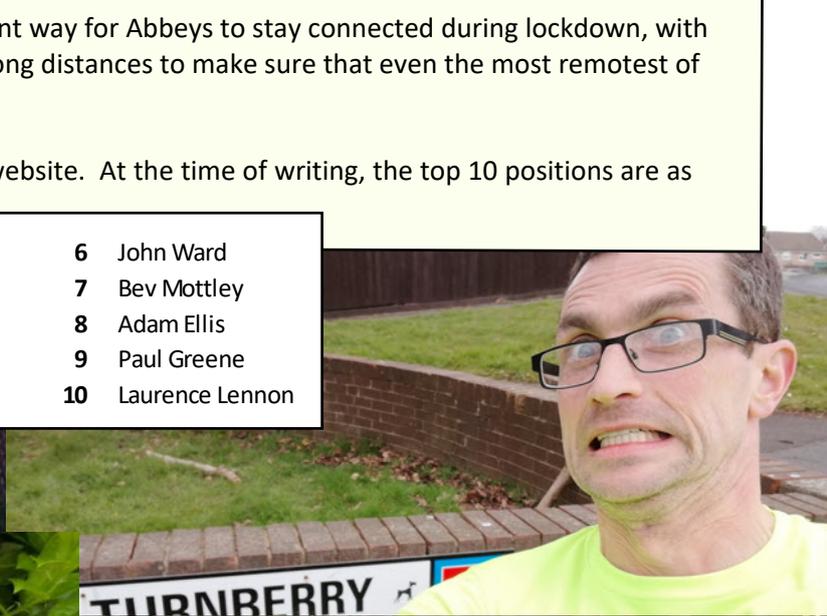
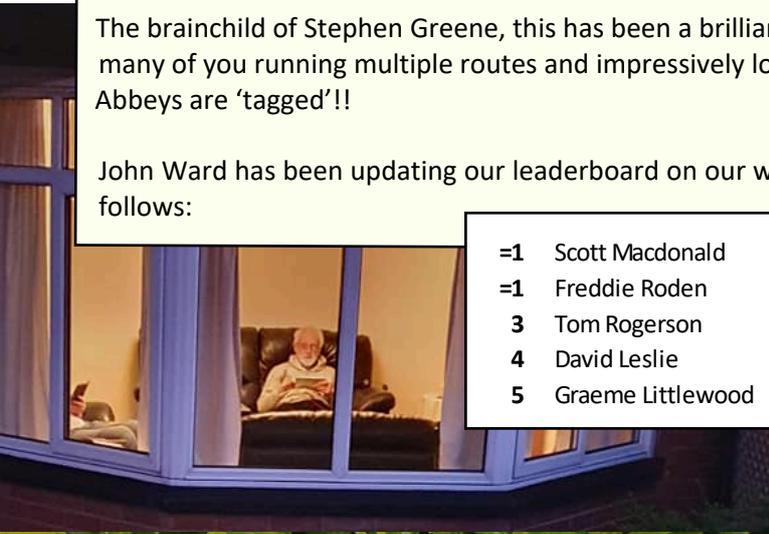


# Abbey Street Tagging...

The brainchild of Stephen Greene, this has been a brilliant way for Abbeys to stay connected during lockdown, with many of you running multiple routes and impressively long distances to make sure that even the most remotest of Abbeys are 'tagged'!!

John Ward has been updating our leaderboard on our website. At the time of writing, the top 10 positions are as follows:

- |    |                   |    |                 |
|----|-------------------|----|-----------------|
| =1 | Scott Macdonald   | 6  | John Ward       |
| =1 | Freddie Roden     | 7  | Bev Mottley     |
| 3  | Tom Rogerson      | 8  | Adam Ellis      |
| 4  | David Leslie      | 9  | Paul Greene     |
| 5  | Graeme Littlewood | 10 | Laurence Lennon |



## Coaches' Corner

This is a regular feature brought to you by your coaching team. We love running and we have a suspicion that you do too! These exercises are important to help keep you injury free and are likely to help you run faster to boot.

### LUNGES!

Love them or hate them, the lunge is another key strengthening for runners.

With benefits such as improving strength in your key running muscles such as your glutes, improving your balance and stability, and opening up your hip flexors and improving your stride length, it is difficult to ignore them.

Start with your hips shoulder-width apart and step forward, bringing your hips down so that your front knee is directly over your front foot and bent at a 90 degree angle, and your back knee is also bent at 90 degrees. Push back up through your front leg, using your glutes (squeeze your bottom) to assist you, until you are back in your standing position.

In the photo (below) you will see that your coach has helpfully demonstrated what not to do, ie having your front knee in front of your foot! Practice in front of a mirror until you are confident you have the technique right.

**Once you have mastered the technique, do a set of 10 on each leg.**



Continued....

## Coaches' Corner (cont.)



### Progressions and variations:

1. Hold a weight in each hand.
2. Backwards lunge – this should put you in exactly the same lunge position, but you get there by stepping backwards, and then return to standing.
3. Walking lunge. From your lunge position, walk through until your other leg is now in front in the lunge position.
4. Lunge with twist. Once in the lunge position, twist your upper body in the direction of your front leg, and then return to a central position before stepping back up to standing. Use your glutes and core muscles (squeeze your bottom and pull your belly button in towards your spine) to stabilise yourself.

Enjoy!

Helen, Jasmine & Mark

If you would like to contribute any articles, features, race reports, etc for the next newsletter, then please email them to the Newsletter Editorial Department at [abbeyweekly@outlook.com](mailto:abbeyweekly@outlook.com)

See you next issue,  
fans!