

Adopted - BvH Subsidised Membership/Payment Plan for Members facing Financial Hardship

As a club we recognise that whilst our Membership Fees represent excellent value for money and are reasonable in comparison to other clubs, there may be times when our members find it difficult to make the payment because of genuine and unavoidable financial difficulties. Faced with a choice between finding the money to renew their Club membership or to cover other necessary living costs for themselves and their dependants, membership of the club may seem like a luxury, and one they're unable to afford. The member may therefore miss out on the wide ranging benefits to their own health and wellbeing that being a member of the club community can bring, and the club may also lose valued members as a result of this. Taking this into consideration the Committee has decided to introduce a scheme to support club members during times of financial hardship or changes in personal circumstance. It is proposed to introduce the scheme in time for the 2018-19 Athletic Year.

Options

Option 1 (Subsidised Membership) – The club member pays the England Athletics part of their membership fee only, the Club agrees to waive the remainder of the subscription. (The current EA fee is £15.62)

Option 2 (Pay by Instalment) – The club member's fees (including the England Athletics part of the fee) are paid by the Club at the start of the year with the full amount being repaid by the member in 6 instalments, payable in May, July, September, November, January and March.

Eligibility

To be eligible for either option the member must have been a fully paid up club member in the preceding year and be a regular attendee at club runs and sessions.

Application

Applications must be made in writing to the Club Chairperson by the end of April here <http://bournvilleharriers.org.uk/contact-us-chairperson>. The application must state which of the options the member would like to be considered for and should broadly outline their reasons for requesting the subsidy or instalment arrangement.

Examples of the types of circumstances which might be considered include:

- Change in income (for e.g. as a result of ill health, redundancy etc.)
- Change in other personal circumstances (e.g. new caring responsibilities, separation or divorce)
- Other unexpected, unplanned or exceptional circumstances (e.g. emergency household repairs, court action etc. resulting in a reduction in disposable income)

The applicant is requested to include the following signed declaration in their application:

"I declare that the information I have provided in my application is true and complete to the best of my knowledge".

Confidentiality

All applications will be considered in strictest confidence by a small panel consisting of the following Officers: Club Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Membership Secretary and Treasurer. No other club

members, including other Committee members, will be made aware of the applications received, nor the outcome of the discussions.

It is not necessary to submit detailed evidence along with the application (e.g. copies of Bank Statements etc.) which might be considered intrusive; however, where the individual member is able to share any documentation (e.g. evidence that they are in receipt of benefits) that might support their application this will help the panel in making their decision whilst also discharging their duties to ensure that Club funds are used appropriately. Further information may be requested by the panel if it would be useful to them in coming to a decision whilst respecting the individual's right to privacy.

The number of applications received and approved will be published along with the Club accounts at the end of the year. All other records (e.g. applications, notes relating to the decision etc.) will be securely destroyed at the end of the relevant athletics year.

Outcomes

The panel will acknowledge the application within one week of receipt, however, they will wait until the deadline has passed to receive all applications before considering them; this is to ensure that the total number of Subsidised Memberships awarded in any given year is affordable/sustainable. The panel will consider all of the relevant information provided by the applicant, as well as factors such as the applicant's membership history with the club, in order to reach their decision. Each decision will be communicated to the relevant applicant in writing as soon as possible and no later than the end of May. Where an application is declined the panel will provide their reasons for doing so.

The decision of the panel is entirely at their discretion and is final, there is no recourse to appeal.

Scheme Introduction

It is intended to introduce this in time for the 2018-19 Athletics Year, and the Options, Application Process etc. will be reviewed to ensure that it meets the stated aims. The scheme may be withdrawn or amended at any future point by a majority vote of the Committee.

Other Support

BvH is a supportive and inclusive club; as well as providing this scheme there are other, informal ways in which the club can support those experiencing financial difficulties, for example we have two Mental Health Ambassadors and many other members who will provide a listening ear or perhaps even their expertise depending on the specific circumstances.