

Greater Cambridge Athletics Network

Aim of the network

To provide excellent services and facilities, for coaches and all levels of athlete in the Greater Cambridge area, which are easily accessible and adopt best practice. Through this to increase the skills of coaches and their enjoyment, to increase the numbers of coaches and to increase participation in athletics and the retention of athletes in the sport.

Objectives of the network

1. To improve standards of coaching and increase the numbers of coaches available
2. To provide support services for coaches and athletes comparable to those in the best facilities world wide
3. To provide athlete development pathways for all athletes whatever their standard and to increase participation in athletics at all levels
4. To operate with a commitment to equal opportunities for all people who wish to take part in amateur athletics without discrimination on the basis of gender, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation or any other irrelevant distinction and to provide support and facilities for people with disabilities in every way it can within its means

Activity plan and key performance indicators

The primary requirements for the network fall under the headings below. The logic for setting out the requirements in this way is as follows:

1. The network wishes to encourage a wide membership from all athletes and athletics bodies which subscribe to its aims and objectives and fall within an appropriate geographic boundary
2. A primary vehicle for delivering the aims and objectives is coach development. There are a number of ways in which this can be carried out and we set out steps through which the network will achieve measurable improvements in coaching in this plan. Detailed tasks will be defined in the first few months after the network has been established. Initial tasks relate to a review of coaching provision and facilities and establishing a baseline.
3. Coach development depends in part on appropriate facilities and sources of expertise. A High Performance Service providing such facilities and expertise is an essential requirement of the network. Initial tasks include the review mentioned above and setting up demonstration events with potential suppliers.
4. An appropriate set of athlete development pathways will be delivered by the improvements in coaching and facilities indicated above.
5. Staff will be needed to support the administration of the network and to drive coach development.

6. Proper financial arrangements are essential to ensure the above activities are carried out using network funding effectively and in a manner suitable for audit.

1. Membership

1. The network should attempt to maximise membership from clubs within the greater Cambridge area, broadly defined, and to provide services and facilities for all wishing to participate in athletics from the area.
2. The following requirements will be expected of members:
 - Affiliation to England Athletics
 - Involvement in athletics, broadly defined
 - Situated within Greater Cambridge - roughly a 20 mile radius from central Cambridge but defined in terms of socio-economic and geographic focus
 - Commitment to the network's aims and objectives
 - Willingness to commit to furthering the outcomes of the network, e.g. through membership of the Steering Group
 - Willingness to pay the appropriate membership fee
3. Member subscription. A membership subscription, initially £50 per year, should be levied to ensure commitment and participation from members, and to contribute to the long-term financial sustainability of the network.
4. Individual membership. In the longer term the network should set up opportunities for individuals, who may not be members of local clubs, to take advantage of network services and facilities for an appropriate fee(s).
5. Higher claim membership. The higher claim rules should be taken up with Athletics Services to ensure they do not work against network membership from small or putative clubs.
6. Composite teams. The network should consider entering composite teams into competitions where this is appropriate and permitted.
7. Network Steering Group. A network steering group should be set up comprising one member from each network organisation plus a treasurer. There should be a small management group of no more than four members who take on day-to-day oversight of the network.

2. Coach development

1. The following activities will be primary functions of the network. The network should carry out a review of coaching and build a series of activities and support services in the light of the review.
 - Development days
 - Use of excellent coaches from elsewhere
 - Mentoring - local coaches acting as a mentor and receiving mentoring
2. Coaching facilities should be reviewed. It is likely that the primary developments in coaching facilities will arise through the high performance service below.

3. High Performance Service

1. Greater Cambridge has lacked facilities which are taken for granted elsewhere. The demand from a co-ordinated network should make it possible to develop service level agreements with a number of suppliers including scholarships, or free support for elite athletes, discounts for non-elite athletes and training days for relevant subsets of coaches and athletes.

2. An early task will be to agree features of Service Level Agreements with EA.
3. Next steps
 - Early discussions to be held with potential suppliers to assess what they could provide, how and for how much, and to build ideas from these discussions into the network plan
 - In the autumn invite suppliers to present a training/demonstration session for coaches/athletes
 - Negotiate service level agreements with selected suppliers.

4. Athlete development pathway

1. The network needs to identify athlete development pathways for the following categories of athletes. These will be prepared following reviews of coaching and facilities and built in to the plan in detail during the first six months of the network's existence. Some early measurable indicators of success are required and can be built on as the network proceeds.
 - Elite athletes
 - Athlete development for non-elite
 - Encouraging new participants
2. Definitions of elite, non-elite etc. will be made in relation to 'Power of 10' criteria. Progress of athletes outside 'Power of 10' criteria will be defined in relation to age-related and gender related percentages.
3. Competitive progression will be part of the development pathways. This is likely to involve discussion about eligibility rules to enable athletes to take part in appropriate competitions, potentially composite teams, where appropriate and permitted, and the creation of new competitive opportunities for some, or all levels of athlete.

5. Staffing

1. The following functions are required, with a total staffing of roughly 1.5 FTEs
2. Activator. The key functions of the post are:
 - Driving the network in close liaison with the clubs and other organisations. This requires a creative, pro-active approach and is not simply the co-ordination of work specified by the network management group
 - Sensitivity to the needs, aspirations and competences of the different members of the network
 - A thorough understanding of athletics and how the network fits with other athletics bodies
 - Management and administration of network activities including co-ordination of different coaching events and schemes, such as a potential network mentoring system
 - Presentations on behalf of the network and some representation of it in sport forums
 - Managing the network's accounts on a day to day basis
 - Seeking volunteers to work with the network and managing them effectively
3. Coach developer/facilitator. The roles required are very varied and a distributed model may be a possible option. We envisage a relatively senior coach being employed to carry out three primary functions:
 - Working with elite athletes or athletes who have the potential to excel at a high level

- Working with other coaches as a mentor or facilitating/encouraging mentoring of coaches
- Acting as a facilitator to bring in coaching skills he or she does not hold
- Talent spotting, or facilitating new talent, by involvement in athlete development, including cross-sport relationships

The senior coach should be sufficiently well networked in athletics to call on other senior coaches to support the network. The organisation of, for example, master classes or weekend training camps, will be taken on by the network activator but recommendations for the staffing of them and the development of the appropriate curriculum will be a responsibility of the senior coach in liaison with network members.

4. A fund raiser to
 - Seek further funding for the network from public and private bodies to ensure long-term sustainability
5. It is our expectation that the network activator will be appointed in time to begin work immediately the network is launched. Other posts will be appointed during the autumn of 2009 in the light of reviews of member clubs, coaching and facilities.

Objective 1: To improve standards of coaching and increase the numbers of coaches available					
Area of development	Lead person or group	Partners	Outcomes	Key performance indicators	Timing
Sharing training opportunities and coaching	Network activator	Network clubs	Ensure that all clubs within the network are sharing training opportunities to provide greater improved experiences for athletes, coaches and volunteers.	3 sets of published sessions open to all network members Annual 10% increase in published sessions	April 2010 2010-12
Increasing links into Further/Higher Education training groups	CU CUAC Network Activator	Network Clubs,	Work with HE and FE providers to ensure good connections are established to the network and network clubs. This includes training camps and visits to schools and colleges by CUAC members. Cambridge University Athletic Club can provide access to high-level training groups, including training possibilities with international-standard athletes. There is the possibility to utilise University and club facilities, participate in sessions and workshops run by highly-qualified CUAC coaches, and to join supplemental activities such as Warm Weather Training trips.	2 school visits agreed 4 further school or FE visits agreed	April 2010 April 2011
Develop coaches and officials to ensure that they are retained in the sport	Network Activator, Network	Network Clubs EA Staff	Network staff will ensure close working links with EA staff to ensure that coach and official education opportunities are properly advertised and communicated. Mentoring programme for selected coaches and	Baseline calculated Baseline calculated	End of 2009 End 2009

	Senior Coach		officials will be devised to ensure that those with potential and an interest to develop are properly supported. This will be resourced using internal and external resources and closely aligned to existing 'developing excellence' programmes.		
Work closer with young sports leaders to provide opportunities to gain experience working in athletic clubs.	Network Activator SC SSP	SSP PDM, Club Volunteer Coordinators	<p>Promote opportunities to young leaders to become involved in network club activities including coaching. A good base is developing at C&C which now has a growing number of young coaches</p> <p>Ensure that clubs are ready to accept young leaders into club, by educating Volunteer Coordinators in clubs to maximize the young leaders' experiences. A positive experience will hopefully retain young leaders in the sport.</p>	<p>Baseline calculated</p> <p>10% increase in new leaders</p> <p>Structure in place</p>	<p>End 2009</p> <p>End 2010</p> <p>End 2010</p>
Create coach development programme to improve the knowledge and experience base of coaches.	Network Senior Coach	Community Coaches, Club Coaches	<p>The intention would be to see that all coaches have the opportunity to improve their coaching knowledge, not just the more performance focused coaches.</p> <p>Responsible for drawing together 'strands' of coach development activity, to ensure that coaches are offering a high quality service and delivering to an appropriate level</p>	<p>Baseline calculated</p> <p>10% increase in number of events plus 20% increase in attendance</p>	<p>End 2009</p> <p>End 2010</p>

Objective 2 To provide support services for coaches and athletes comparable to those in the best facilities world wide					
Develop 'High Performance Service' to support coaches	Network Activator	Network Steering Group	Develop coaching support via local providers for basic coaching functions. This will include individual and specialised group support and development days for groups of coaches, with their athletes as appropriate	Service level agreements in place	April 2010
Develop 'High Performance Service' for athletes.	Network Activator	Network Steering Group	Develop criteria for athlete scholarship programme to access services. Criteria of eligibility would be designed to ensure that athletes are accepted on ability and not age.	Criteria agreed	End 2009
	Network Activator	Cambridge University,	Link into the existing athlete support programme through the current University services including sports psychology, performance lifestyle services and strength & conditioning support.	Links in place	April 2010
	Network Activator	SCDC	Provide reduced swim passes and gym membership of local authority facilities for selected athletes to use.	Take up target agreed	April 2010
	Network Activator	Network Steering Group	Set up discounts with local providers for strength and conditioning and injury prevention	Agreement in place	Autumn 2010
	Network Activator	Network Steering Group	Organise training days on basic issues for all athletes, such as nutrition, conditioning, injury prevention.	Agreement in place	April 2010
				2 training days delivered	Autumn 2010

Objective 3
To provide athlete development pathways for all athletes whatever their standard and to increase participation in athletics at all levels

Continue to expand road running activity	C&C SS NJ	Local Non Network running clubs.	Continue the development of joint competition events, such as the existing 5k summer league, to provide a pathway into higher level events and greater opportunities for athletes	Baseline calculated	End 2009
		Local business sponsorship funding	Formation of a network representative team, where appropriate and permitted, based on, for example, performance in the 5k series	5% annual increase in participation	2010-12
		Festival of Running sponsors and team	Continue to develop the Cambridge Festival of Running to provide good competitive opportunities and bring new runners into the sport, or existing fun runners into clubs.	25% increase in participation	2010-11
		Network Clubs	Attract and support non-affiliated runners and bring them into clubs through open races; Cambridge Cambourne 10k, Saffron Walden 10K, Newmarket 10K and gallops race etc.	2% of non-affiliated participants transfer to clubs.	2010-12
Further develop links to female only running	SS RC	Runnerway	Aim to further support the transition of female runners into Women's Running Networks and to local clubs as appropriate	Baseline calculated	End 2009
Develop links between local clubs and the Cambourne women's running network	C&C	Via the Cambridge Festival of Running	The Cambourne women's running network is participated in the first Cambridge Festival and stronger ties could be developed with them.	5% annual increase	2010-12
Develop a toolkit for				Baseline calculated	End 2009
				An increase in the membership of the women's networks of 10% per year	

women's running networks	SCDC		SCDC will develop a toolkit to support the setting up of WRNs in local villages.	Baseline calculated Increase number of networks by target (to be agreed)	End 2009 2010-12
Put in outreach activities to other sports clubs, especially winter sports	Network activator and senior coach	All network clubs	Encourage athletes from other sports to try athletics	One link made Two further links	Spring 2010 Spring 2011
Fun athletics for men in the 30-45 age range	Network activator	All network members		Baseline calculated	End 2009
Increase the number of young people taking part in athletics out of school hours on school sites and in community settings	Network Activator Community Athletics Coaches and Network Coaching Officer	Local SSPs (South Cams, Camb City, Forest Heath, Saffron Walden)	Provide more high quality athletics coaching opportunities for young people on school sites and then encourage transition into community settings Increase the number of young people taking part in sports hall athletics events Provide athletics opportunities for Level 1 Sport Leaders and Level 2 Community Sports Leaders. Utilise young peoples' requirement to volunteer in sports clubs as part of the Step into Sport programme. Provide training/CPD for teachers in after-school clubs Potential future club members as athletes,	Percentage increases linked to SSP Targets	From inception of network

			coaches, officials or volunteers.		
Increase participation in school years 3-6	C&C	NJ SS	Continue development of C&C Community clubs or equivalent to provide opportunities for top primary age children	Baseline calculated 50% increase over existing community club	End 2009 2010-12
Increase participation in track and field athletics by adults	C&C NJ SS Network Activator	Other local sports organisations	Encourage road runners from network clubs to consider track and field athletics	Baseline calculated	End 2009
Develop progression routes for athletes through network clubs to meet individuals' needs	Network Activator, Network Senior coach	Network Clubs	To develop an athlete centred pathway for local athletes of all ages and disciplines. By working collaboratively, clubs and coaches will be able to provide a coaching pathway not limited to club 'boundaries'. An extensive education and mentoring programme will be devised to a 'network coach' programme to ensure that where an individual coach does not have the knowledge to further support an athlete, they can be passed onto other coaches with the specific knowledge, without fear of poaching or leaving their current coach. The benefit of moving between a team of coaches can only improve the positive experience of all.	Baseline calculated Increase number of pathways to be determined 10% of club athletes in a development/progression programme. 25% of athletes in the development programme to have moved up a level.	End 2009 End 2010 2011-12
Discuss eligibility rules to ensure network needs in these areas can be met	Network Activator and Network Steering Group	England Athletics	To discuss higher claim rules and similar so that athlete progression is facilitated.	Initial discussions instigated	April 2010

Objective 4:

To operate with a commitment to equal opportunities for all people who wish to take part in amateur athletics without discrimination on the basis of gender, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation or any other irrelevant distinction and to provide support and facilities for people with disabilities in every way it can within its means

Playground 2 Podium Athlete Assessment Day	SCDC	Network clubs	To identify potential talented athletes and for them to be able to access athletics within the network	Assessment Day carried out Athlete baseline developed 10% annual increase in athletes reached	Spring 2010 January 2010
Develop links with local school provision	SCDC, SCSSP	C&C	To use Community hours within South Cambs CSC post to develop school club links with the Pavilion at Impington VC and other mainstream schools (focusing on children with a disability) and develop player pathways, in particular for those with a VI, Hearing impairment or with a physical disability.	Initial discussion held with IVC Links and pathways under development	December 2009 Spring 2010
Disability competition	SCDC, SCSSP	C&C	To support the first disability competition to be held within Greater Cambridge (outside of the Youth Games PLUS) ensuring promotion of the regional competition and greater representation from Greater Cambridge	Competition devised First competition held Representation from Greater Cambridge to increase annually by 10%	Spring 2010 Summer 2010
Sportshall competition	SCDC, SCSSP	C&C	To develop a Schools Sports Hall competition as part of the Competition PLUS programme.	First competition held Number of athletes involved to increase by 10% annually	Autumn 2009

Other requirements: Providing the infrastructure to enable the objectives to be fulfilled					
Raise funding from public and private sector bodies and other sources	Network Steering Group		Appoint fundraiser and agree a fundraising plan	Baseline calculated	End 2009
Negotiate Service Level Agreements with local providers	Network Activator and Network Steering Group	England Athletics	Agreed service levels for the provision of services to coaches and athletes	SLAs agreed	April 2010
Develop communications strategy	Network Activator	Network Steering Group	Ensure network activities are well communicated in the sub region	Strategy agreed	End 2009
			Develop a web site	Web site running	End 2009?