

# LEICESTERSHIRE DISABILITY ATHLETICS DEVELOPMENT GROUP 4TH ANNUAL REPORT FROM OFFICERS 2016/17



1st September 2016 – 31st August 2017

*This report contains details of the Leicestershire Disability Athletics Development Group's activities, successes and aspirations for the 2016/17 school year.*

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1ST SEPTEMBER 2016 – 31ST AUGUST 2017

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**Leicestershire Disability Athletics Development Group  
c/o Saffron Lane Athletics Stadium, Saffron Lane, Leicester, LE2 7NQ**

## INTRODUCTION

The Leicestershire Disability Athletics Development Group (LDADG) works to offer all disabled athletes access to high quality coaching, competition and exit routes into sustained participation. This report continues to acknowledge the LDADG as a significant and important organisation for the development of disability athletics across the counties of Leicestershire and Rutland. The group is recognised and supported by Leicester City Council, Leicestershire & Rutland Athletics Association, Leicestershire & Rutland Sport, and nationally, by Sportshall.org, EFDS, CP Sport, England Athletics and British Athletics. The group also supports athletes from across the East Midlands to enable them to take part in regional and national competitions. There are few, if any, other counties that can boast a development group such as this. This report reflects the work and ethics of the LDADG and it is the fourth annual report from the group.

## STRUCTURE

The Leicestershire Disability Athletics Development Group is a voluntary group which is affiliated to England Athletics (the national governing body for the sport of athletics). Its meetings are open to all those who are interested in developing disability athletics in Leicestershire & Rutland. The group was formally established in 2010 to provide a more coordinated approach to providing high quality opportunities for participation and competition for athletes with all forms of disability. There is little or no paid involvement in the group.

## OFFICERS

LDADG is has a formally structured group, although it has a constitution and has elected the following officers in order for it to operate a bank account and make representative decisions.

Chair – Cherie D’Silva  
Secretary – Rob Snart (until November 2016) Post vacant  
Treasurer – Dan Hewins

The list of partners at the end of the report is testimony to the growth in the significance of the group within city and county wide school structures and also to the coordination of effort with the national and regional organisations in athletics and disability sport nationally.

## SUCSESSES

Working in partnership with local athletics clubs, with individual schools and local schools structures has continued. This has ensured a steady increase in participation in disability athletics in Leicestershire, where the LDADG has organised and supported various projects, events and activities. The most successful events in 2016/17 are featured below.

### ✓ **LEICESTERSHIRE DISABILITY CROSS COUNTRY CHAMPIONSHIPS**

These events took place in March and continued the 2016 format of two separate events: a festival in a city park with a 1km opportunity for both ambulant and wheelchair athletes; and competitive races over 2km and 3km. These longer races help schools identify athletes for distance races on the track in the summer. The festival event took place at Aylestone Park and it was good to see several mainstream primary schools involved. Ashfield Academy had a great turnout for the 1km wheelchair race. The traditional 2km and 3km races for KS3/4/5 pupils (age 11 and over) held at Maplewell Hall School were also another great success. 29 entries were submitted for the 3km course (33 in 2016), and 45 athletes entered the 2km race (44 in 2016). The support from Maplewell Hall is much appreciated and the school is an excellent venue for cross country, all competitors are warmly welcomed and the school's young leaders were out in force to ensure a quality experience for all athletes taking part.

The number of schools involved remains consistent although several regular attenders were unable (for different reasons e.g. clash of dates) to attend. Offering the two events ensures all needs are catered for. The festival event including the primary children gives schools an opportunity to introduce children to competitive running at a level that is appropriate to their abilities. The wheelchair "time trial" event on the path ensures the inclusion of children who would otherwise be unable to access the spring term event.

### ✓ **LEICESTERSHIRE DISABILITY ATHLETICS CHAMPIONSHIPS AND FESTIVAL**

The Group never stands still and in 2017 increased its outdoor athletics events at Saffron Lane Stadium to three. These were: the County and Regional Disability Athletics Finals on 4<sup>th</sup> May (sponsored by "Typhoo") - providing a top class competition for all ; the County Athletics Festival on 12<sup>th</sup> May for athletes over eleven years of age - providing participation for all; and in June a primary schools parallel athletics festival. These events combine to give all talented athletes within Leicestershire and the East Midlands qualifying opportunities for progression to National Championships. All the events were successful and enabled athletes to achieve their very best results on the track and in the field. The LDADG ensures that the events are led by qualified officials and supported by volunteers both from schools and other volunteer networks. The lower entry numbers for the Championships and Festival (11+ age group) were disappointing and running the events over two days from a financial point of view may prove to have been disastrous. However the separation of the Festival and the Championships was a positive success for the participants as they felt they were less rushed and more able to enjoy the events. The primary Parallel festival was well received but not without problems on the day with additional schools arriving who had not registered for the event. This must not however deter from the positives with brilliant support from young leaders and a visit from Richard Kerr (CP Sport).

### ✓ **CONTINUED SUCCESS AT NATIONAL AND REGIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS**

Athletes were selected from the Championship event for both MENCAP and DSE National Championships. Our entries were smaller this year which reflected the national picture. We did though provide the

opportunity for our local athletes to be able to access these events which are not available in many parts of the country particularly through a school route. Crown Hills were unable to attend due to staffing which highlights the fact that schools are so reliant on one person and when that breaks down it is incredibly difficult to find a substitute. In the summer of 2017 we supported the following:

- MENCAP National Championships – from 2 schools/colleges and 1 club.
- DSE National Junior Championships – The East Midlands team was made up of just 3 athletes: 2 ambulant (both Leicestershire) and 1 male wheelchair user (Lincolnshire)

We hope to continue to support athletes who show potential and assist them, where necessary, to enter regional and national competitions.

### ✓ **WHEELCHAIR RACERS**

The training group has continued to be available on a fortnightly basis and is regularly accessed by a group of young people. This is successfully supported by three local experts and also by Job King, from British Athletics. It is also really helpful that athletes have the opportunity of joining with the group that Job coaches at Coventry. It was not possible for any of the athletes to take part in the Virgin London Mini Marathon Wheelchair race this year although these opportunities were discussed. Funding has allowed us to purchase small items of equipment e.g. gloves.



### ✓ **SPORTSHALL ATHLETICS SERIES**

This series of events run by LDADG continues to grow. In October-December 2016 pupils from 30 schools entered the 5 events that were on offer to special and mainstream schools. The primary school competition was split into a county and a city event with 20 schools involved and a total of 147 children. The secondary event is now fully embedded in the Leicester-shire and Rutland School Games "Super Series". Teams qualify for the finals (Level 3) at Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4/5 from a level 2

School Games event. At the level 3 event in 2016 all 10 districts were represented for the first time.

Schools truly value these events at all levels as can be seen by the following quotes:-

"The team we sent came back buzzing at winning their trophy and all said they had a great day "(Simon from Dorothy Goodman School)

"It was a really good day yesterday, I don't think I've had a group before enjoy themselves so much and be so enthusiastic" (Nigel from Badgerbrook Primary School)



## CHALLENGES

The items highlighted below are referenced in this document to demonstrate the awareness by the LDADG of the key challenges that the group aims to address during the 2017-2018 year and beyond.

### ➤ **ATHLETE CLASSIFICATIONS**

This continues to be an area for discussion and is not something that is specific to Leicestershire. It has been raised in Parliament and without doubt will be a hot topic for the future. In the 2015–16 annual report we highlighted the increased difficulty of categorisation for those with intellectual disabilities and this has continued to be an ongoing with one of our successful athletes. It was also discussed in relation to the Virgin London Mini Marathon Paralympic events where a disability ambulant race should have been on offer but in 2017 it was not included.

Our links through Job King to classification opportunities and workshops for talented athletes provided by England Athletics and British Athletics are incredibly important and we have a wonderful network of partners through whom we are able to disseminate this information.

### ➤ **RECRUITING VOLUNTEERS**

Throughout this year an agenda item has been “Group Capacity and future support”. The LDADG can no longer rely on a paid workforce and all committee members fulfil their roles in their own time. This is not unique to this group and we continue to seek new helpers to fulfil a whole spectrum of roles to ensure that we can continue to offer the depth and breadth of opportunities that we have done in the past. Delivering the events on the day is manageable but it is the pre- and post- event administrative tasks that demand attention. We still have not managed to find a volunteer to look at the marketing and media aspects of the group but perhaps more pertinent is that we no longer have a secretary. This position was held by Rob Snart and was seen as part of his paid Sports Development role within Leicester City Council. Rob has moved on and with tightening of budgets Leicester City Council can no longer cover this. The group continue to operate however we do need to find additional administrative support.

### ➤ **INCLUSIVE CLUBS AND COACHES**

This is still a challenge and we continually look to see how we can increase the knowledge and understanding of those involved in athletics to have an inclusive approach, this is the clubs and the coaching workforce. We are fortunate to be close to several clubs that promote opportunities for those with additional needs but for some athletes the travel to these clubs can be a problem.

### ➤ **RETAINING QUALITY WHILE QUANTITY OF PARTICIPANTS INCREASES**

As the number of competitions we offer increases and the amount of participants we attract to these events increases the challenge is retain a high quality offer for participants. We remain dedicated to offering activity that is suitable for everyone, although this may lead to time restraints we will endeavour to find a solution which means all participants get a high quality experience and remain engaged in the sport. In the past couple of years we have increased the number of festival type events that provide the perfect entry level competition in disability athletics.

### ➤ **EMBEDDING LDADG INTO THE WIDER SPORTING LANDSCAPE**

Leicestershire is recognised by national organisations as an important county in disability athletics; however there is still work to do to improve the visibility of disabled athletes as well as the work of the group. We

are committed to embedding disability athletics into the local and regional sporting landscape. To do this we need to develop more links with partner organisations and increase our visibility with the partners we already work with. Whilst we work closely with Leicester-shire & Rutland Sport on numerous projects, including the School Games, we lack visibility on their website and promotions. Steps are being taken to address this already, but there is still a lot of work to do. We are also looking to develop further links with CP (Cerebral Palsy) Sport as we know there is demand in our local communities and schools for activity.

➤ **DEVELOPING SCORING SYSTEMS**

The group has been at the forefront of aiding national athletics organisations in developing adapted scoring systems for competitions; however this is still a very complicated and difficult task. Whereas significant developments have been made in Sportshall Athletics, the organising of track and field outdoor championships and parallel programmes is very difficult. One possibility in overcoming this is to limit the number of medal events in each competition, but this may mean young people miss out on being recognised for their achievements.



**Sportshall Disability Athletics competition (KS3) at Crown Hills Community College**

## PARTNER ORGANISATIONS

Leicestershire Disability Athletics Development Group would like to thank its partners and participating schools for their support in developing Disability Athletics in Leicestershire and Rutland and for their continued hard work and dedication. It has been a remarkable achievement to have local teachers, carers and assistants attending the competitions and providing encouragement and support. We have particularly found that the increase in mainstream school attendance across the county has been an enhancement and a challenge for all participants. We have continued to work closely with national organisations both to provide input for their development as well as to receive advice and guidance for our events.

<b>Leicestershire and Rutland School/College/Clubs as Participating Partners</b>	
Ashfield Academy	Ashmount School
Babington Community College	Badgerbrook Primary School
Birkett House School	Brocks Hill Primary School
Buswells Lodge Primary School	Catmose College
Church Langton Primary School	Crown Hills Community College
Dorothy Goodman School	Ellesmere College
Evington Valley Primary School	Forest Way School
Gateway College	Glenfield Primary School
Glen Hills Primary School	Heathfield Academy
Inglehurst Junior School	Lady Jane Grey Primary School
Judgemeadow Community College	Maplewell Hall School
Marriott Primary School	Mayflower Primary School
Millfield Academy	Mountfields Lodge School
Netherhall Primary School	Oakham C of E School
Oaklands Primary School	Parkland Primary School
Queensmead Primary School	Saffron AC
Special Olympics Multi-Sports (SOL)	Spinney Hill Primary School
Stokes Wood	St Barnabas Primary School
St Joseph's Primary School	St Bartholomew's C of E Primary School
St Mary and St John's Primary School	St Mary's Church of England Primary School
St Mary and St Joseph Primary School, Rutland	Westgate School
Wigston Academy	Woodland Grange Primary School
<b>National, Regional and Local Organisation Partners</b>	
British Athletics (UK Athletics)	CP Sport
Crown Hills Community College Leadership Academy	Disability Sport England (DSE and EFDS)
England Athletics	The Lancaster School Young Leaders
Leicester City Council	Leicester City School Sport & Physical Activity Network
Leicestershire and Rutland AA	Leicestershire & Rutland Sport
Leicestershire & Rutland Legacy Makers	Lions International
Mencap Sport	Rutland District Council
Rutland School Sport Partnership	Sportshall Associates
St Andrew's School, Derby	Typhoo (for Regional Sponsorship)

**FINANCE REPORT**

All Competitions need to balance their finances. We also need to use any spare income to maintain existing specialist equipment as well as to fund the attendance of athletes at competitions, purchase medals and to maintain the group.

Comparison of Expenditure with previous year  
Income

Ten Competitions Delivered in 2016-17		Seven Competitions Delivered in 2015-16	
Entry Fee Income	£1782		£1,500
Grant for competition	£950		£950
Total Competition Income	£2732		£2,459
SSPAN Sportshall equipment hire	£300		£200

**Expenditure**

SPORTSHALL ATHLETICS	2016-17		2015-16
Total Expenditure	£1,168		£519
<b>CROSS COUNTRY</b>			
Total Expenditure	£0		£0
<b>TRACK &amp; FIELD (11 AND OVER)</b>			
Total Expenditure	£1680		£1836
<b>OUTDOOR PRIMARY SCHOOLS</b>			
Total Expenditure	£531		£496

**COMPETITIONS ATTENDED BY LOCAL ATHLETES**

	2016-17		2015-16
DSE CHAMPIONSHIPS Transport	£0		£0
MENCAP CHAMPIONSHIPS Transport	£580.00		£210

Item	Income	Expenditure	Balance
Sportshall Athletics	£906.00	£1,168.00	-£262.00
X Country	£126.00	£0.00	£126.00
Outdoor Athletics	£1,700.00	£2,211.34	-£511.34
National mencap Transport	£190.00	£580.00	-£390.00
S.Hall Equipment Rental	£300.00	£0.00	£300.00
EA Affiliation	n/a	£100.00	-£100.00
<b>Annual Total</b>	<b>£3,222.00</b>	<b>£4,059.34</b>	<b>-£837.34</b>

Dan Hewins, Treasurer, presented a fuller version of these accounts at the annual general meeting and they were formally accepted by the Group. In summary, the competitions promoted and delivered by the group needed to use £837 from our reserve account to maintain a balance of the income and expenditure accounts. The generosity of Maplewell Hall School and of Crown Hills Community College in allowing us to use their venues was acknowledged and applauded.

## Some more photos of the Sportshall Athletics series.

Many of the pupils were thrilled to be photographed with the elite local sprint athlete, Elliott Powell.

