

Hello Striders,

Two years ago Team Smitchard proudly became the men's and women's captains of Elvet Striders. It is with mixed emotions today as we write this statement as our time is coming to an end.

We have both done our utmost to represent the interests of all our the members to the very best of our abilities. The sense of pride and joy from pulling on the purple top has never diminished and continues to drive us both.

We have seen so many people achieve their goals over the last two years that it's almost impossible to list them all here. To the people we have helped, it's been our absolute pleasure. For your amazing spirit and commitment, a big thank you from us both. It's been a challenge at times but those kind words and messages make it worth all the effort.

A club like ours thrives on positivity and friendships plus some healthy competition, so we have focused our efforts on the Wednesday club runs and they remain some of our proudest memories as captains. Everyone coming together to race the handicap and then post London to celebrate the Championship and give something back with Miles for Matt is a special highlight and a reminder of how far we have come. Today we regularly place at a wide range of events, both in age grades and at the very top. Clubs know who we are and respect the talent we always knew we had. We are a true force to be reckoned with in the North East which is something we are very proud to have played a part in.

As well as the podium finishes, our friendly nature and the overwhelming support for each other really make us stand out, something we always had as a club but has grown even stronger. We celebrate everyone achieving their goal whatever

it is, first marathon, crazy ultra, that 5K PB or just getting out on a cold night and chatting to someone ticking off those miles.

It's easy to forget that weekly Monday and Wednesday sessions, monthly Club runs and the bigger club events require organising and dedicated volunteers to make them happen. So a big thank you to our amazing run leaders and the rest of the Committee who have helped over the last two years.

Fear not, we are not disappearing into the sunset never to be seen again. It's just time for us to step back and focus on running projects that have been on the back burner for a while now. We'll still be playing an active role in the club.

Hopefully we will continue to push the positive reputation of Elvet Striders and with your help we can grow even stronger together.

Thank you

Your captains

Gareth and Catherine
Team Smitchard
#proudtobepurple