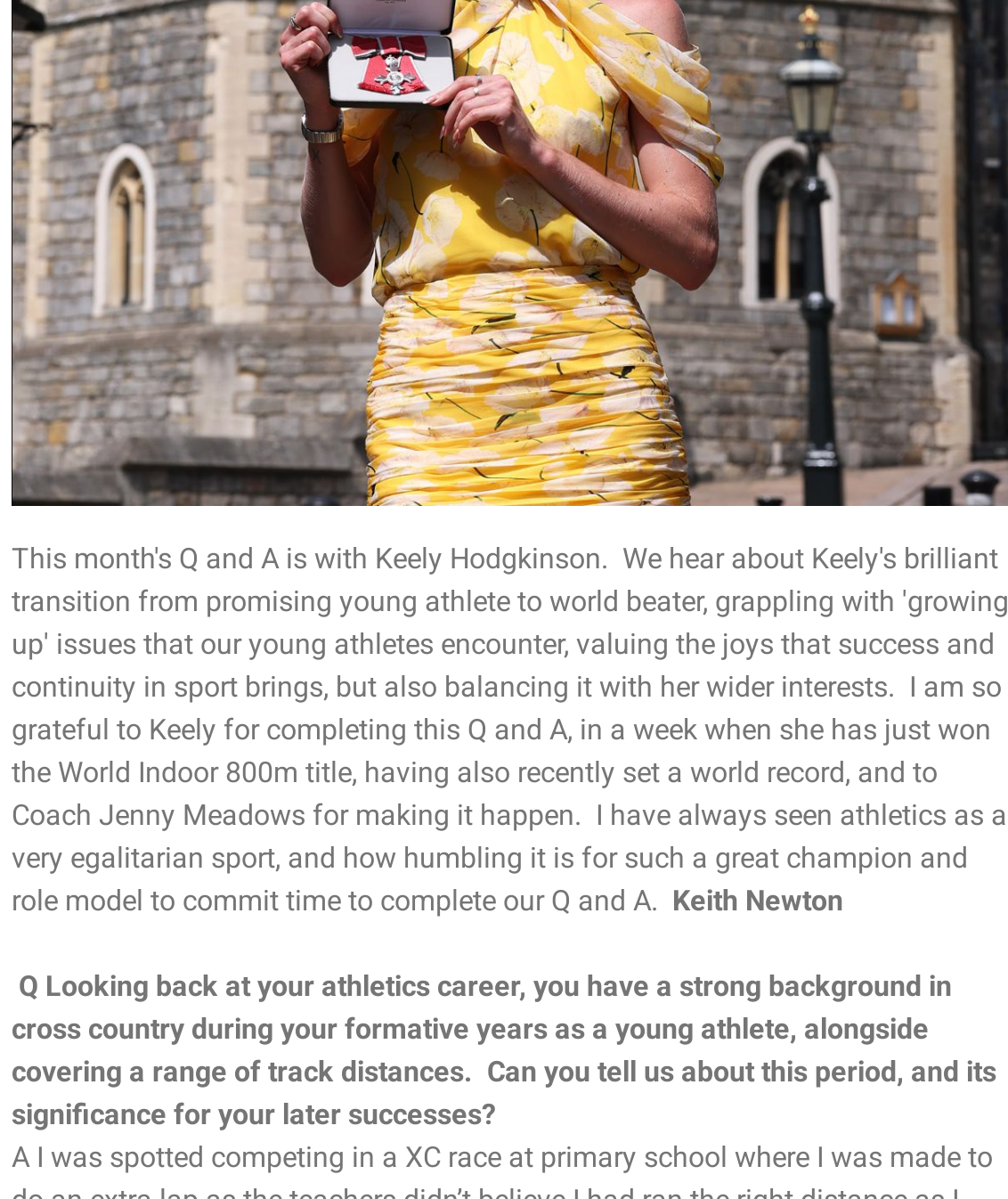


# HERNE HILL HARRIERS HIGHLIGHTS

## March 2026

Welcome to your monthly Newsletter – I hope you enjoy it. Athletes, coaches, team managers if you have any photos and achievements you would like include in future issues, please email me: glenkeeganhh@gmail.com

### From School XC to World Champion: Keely Hodgkinson Shares Her Journey



This month's Q and A is with Keely Hodgkinson. We hear about Keely's brilliant transition from promising young athlete to world beater, grappling with 'growing up' issues that our young athletes encounter, valuing the joys that success and continuity in sport brings, but also balancing it with her wider interests. I am so grateful to Keely for completing this Q and A, in a week when she has just won the World Indoor 800m title, having also recently set a world record, and to Coach Jenny Meadows for making it happen. I have always seen athletics as a very egalitarian sport, and how humbling it is for such a great champion and role model to commit time to complete our Q and A. **Keith Newton**

**Q Looking back at your athletics career, you have a strong background in cross country during your formative years as a young athlete, alongside covering a range of track distances. Can you tell us about this period, and its significance for your later successes?**

A I was spotted competing in a XC race at primary school where I was made to do an extra lap as the teachers didn't believe I had ran the right distance as I made it to the finish so soon. I then joined a club, Leigh Harriers, who have a history of XC so it was the part of the sport that I enjoyed the most as a youngster. Back then if anyone told me I would be a speed based athlete later in my career I wouldn't have thought that possible as it was so far removed from my introduction to the sport.

**Q Probably like most Clubs, an issue we grapple with is keeping girls and boys in the sport as they progress through their teens. It would be good to hear from you about your motivations, and key elements of the support network that contributed to your journey.**

A Sport has always been my passion and the thing I'm good at. I was a swimmer when I was younger and then took up Athletics and did them both for a while. It was like I had two lives and two sets of friends, School friends and Sports Club friends so it was good that I always had Sports friends in my life so I didn't think I was different to my School friends and could keep motivated. My parents have always been so supportive driving me around and making arrangements for me, so this helped me navigate these teen years. Then of course I met my coaches, Trevor and Jenny, and the support network grew.

**Q One area that some teenagers grapple with is body image and sport, as they encounter puberty and girls start their periods. It would be good to hear from you with any reflections on these issues, and coping mechanisms for dealing with challenges that may have emerged.**

A It is hard growing up, so many people struggle with it as a lot of going on with both your body and mind during those years. I'm the eldest of 4 siblings so I can appreciate how people differ through these years as I would say all 4 of us have handled it differently. All I would say is everyone's development is different and keeping involved and engaged with sport can be something consistent in your life when there is so much change happening around you. Don't compare yourself to others performance wise too much during these times as I wasn't a stand-out and the best performer in any age group. I came through when it was the right time for me to do so.

**Q Over 40% of our Club members are in the 11-18 age category. We have a very active Welfare Team who have arranged a number of talks on subjects such as 'Sports Nutrition Fundamentals to Improve Performance', as we see this as part of our duty of care to our athletes. As an elite athlete, it would be good to hear from you about your approach to sports nutrition, and how you strike a balance.**

A I eat really healthy and always have done. My Dad would't taste make me "healthy smoothies" as I was growing up, and they wouldn't always be good, but he drummed into me that I had to eat the right things for bone development and to give me the energy to do my sport. I don't even like the taste or feeling of having unhealthy foods. I work with a nutritionist, Louise Bloor, who has made me realise how much food I need to eat in order to help me fuel properly for the demands of training and competition – I eat a lot! I'm always thinking about what fuel I need to take throughout the day, pre and post training.

**Q Your events, 400m and 800m, involve a combination of speed, endurance and strength. I was interested to read that you have put a bit more emphasis on muscle building in more recent training, with your stunning indoor world record and 400m PB indicating that the training balance is working incredibly well. Can you tell us about any changes made?**

A Having a year out of competition from Paris Olympic Games 2024 to my comeback race in Silesia 12 months later felt as if I was in base training the whole time. It was so frustrating watching everyone else compete! During that time however it seemed as if my body had a reset too and I was working on things in the gym that meant I was putting more emphasis on becoming stronger. During this time, I wasn't doing much intense exercise and my body mass was increasing. At first, I didn't like the see the numbers going up on the scales as, especially as females, we are conditioned to think that we perform best when the scales say a certain number. I had to reassure myself that this is where my body naturally has felt it should be and what is best for me to stay healthy and injury-free. It has meant that I have more power and therefore speed available which I am seeing as a huge positive.

**Q Beyond track and field, you seem to have a lot of interests, including city life, fashion, football, music to name just a few. Having a well rounded approach to life that juggles different interests seems to have a lot of advantages, albeit with some time management challenges as an Olympic Champion! Can you say a bit about how you balance things?**

A Yes, I'm definitely not a crazy running girl and have so much more I want to see, enjoy and accomplish in life. I spend a lot of time overseas on camps which makes me crave spending time at home and seeing friends so I plan these things in so that I can get that balance I need in life. I love all the opportunities that my success in sport has given me, however I always say that I wouldn't enjoy them if I wasn't running well so running, which I'm privileged to call my job, has always got to be the priority with the other things being a close second.

**Q Finally, what advice would you give to a teenager who is just starting their athletics journey?**

A Be curious and openminded as you never know what can lay ahead for you. Personal challenge is so important so keep setting yourself goals that you can focus towards achieving and before you know it you may be doing things you didn't think you could.

### Tooting BMC

Please note entries are open for our 19th August British Milers Club meeting. Please do enter if you have the entry standard. We always welcome helpers on the night. If you'd like to get involved please contact keith.newtonhh@hotmail.co.uk

<https://www.britishmilersclub.com/meeting/marketaxess-tooting-bec-19-aug-2026-record-breaker/>

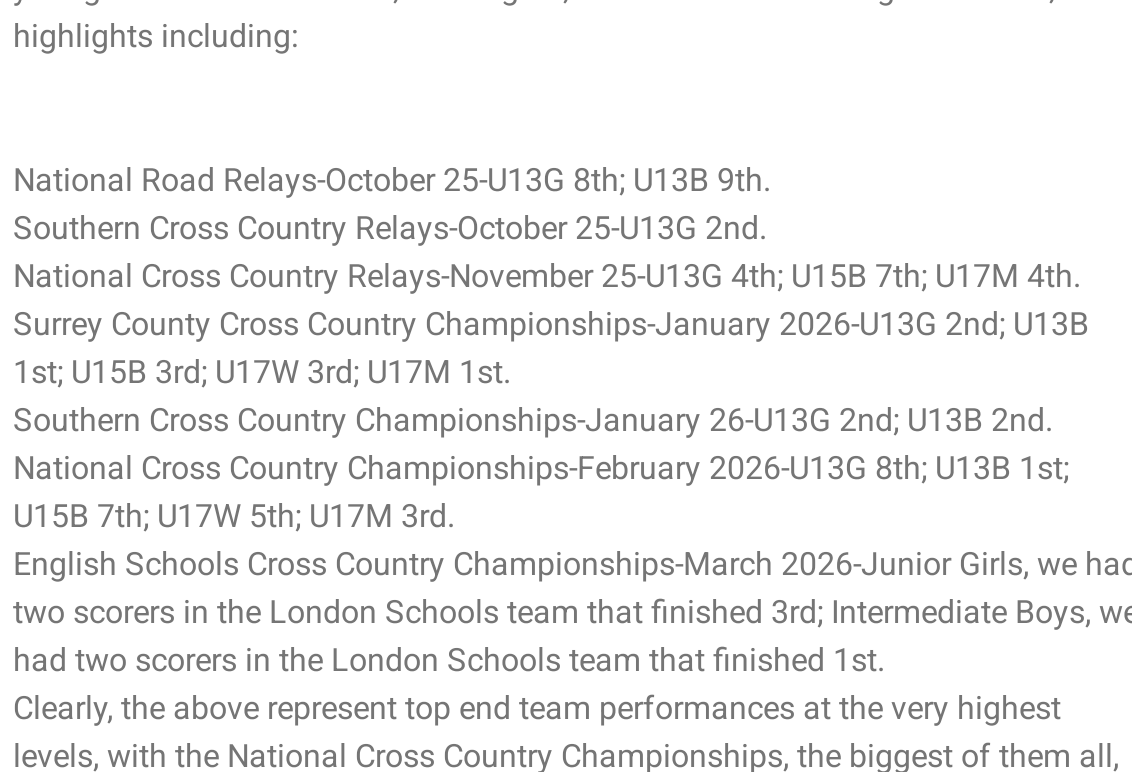
### Twenty Years a Harrier: Katie Snowden Back on the World Stage



Katie Snowden is now in her 20th year as a member of HHH, having first officially joined age 12 in October 2006. One of the many reasons why I'm so keen to attend these meetings to simply be there for her, as much fun as they generally are anyway.

Katie was back in a Great Britain team for a major change for the first time since the Europeans in Rome in 2024 and acquitted herself very well in a messy, tactical race where a strong finish saw her place 8th. The fact that in a world champs final she placed higher than the 9th she finished in Europe in Rome 2 years ago shows she's now approaching her best form again. A performance most worthy of celebration, even though Katie still of course strives for more. We can all be proud of her. **Geoff Jerwood**

### Club road racing, from strength to strength



March/April time is a transition phase for many when the focus is very much on road racing, pre marathons and/or track. This Spring has seen a veritable feast of PBs and top level performances by Club athletes. In the words of a former Prime Minister, we 'have never had it so good.'

The quality and strength in depth within the Club was evident at the Southern 6 and 12 stage road relays, a mixture of long and short legs (8.6 and 5km), with our Senior Women extending on another superb winter season with silver medals in the six stage. There were brilliant runs from all team members; Sophie Tooley, Margaret Coogan, Bryony Proctor, Molly Smith, Soraya Lockwood and Helena Keenan.

Our men's A team finishing a record equalling 5th place. Sam Bramwell smashed the reigning Southern (and second in the National) Cross Country Champion's course record, as he ripped through the field, and underlined his standing as one of the Country's top relay leg runners, clocking 14.13. Harry Bell ran an excellent 15.14, and our quickest two long leg runners both dipped under 27 minutes, Tom Austin 26.45 and Ollie Mills 26.54. Our B team finished in our highest ever position, 15th and second B team, with Keely HHH times going to James Nutt 15.59 and debutant Ollie Sweett, 27.37.

Our combined score of 7, women's and men's teams finishing positions, surpassed all others.

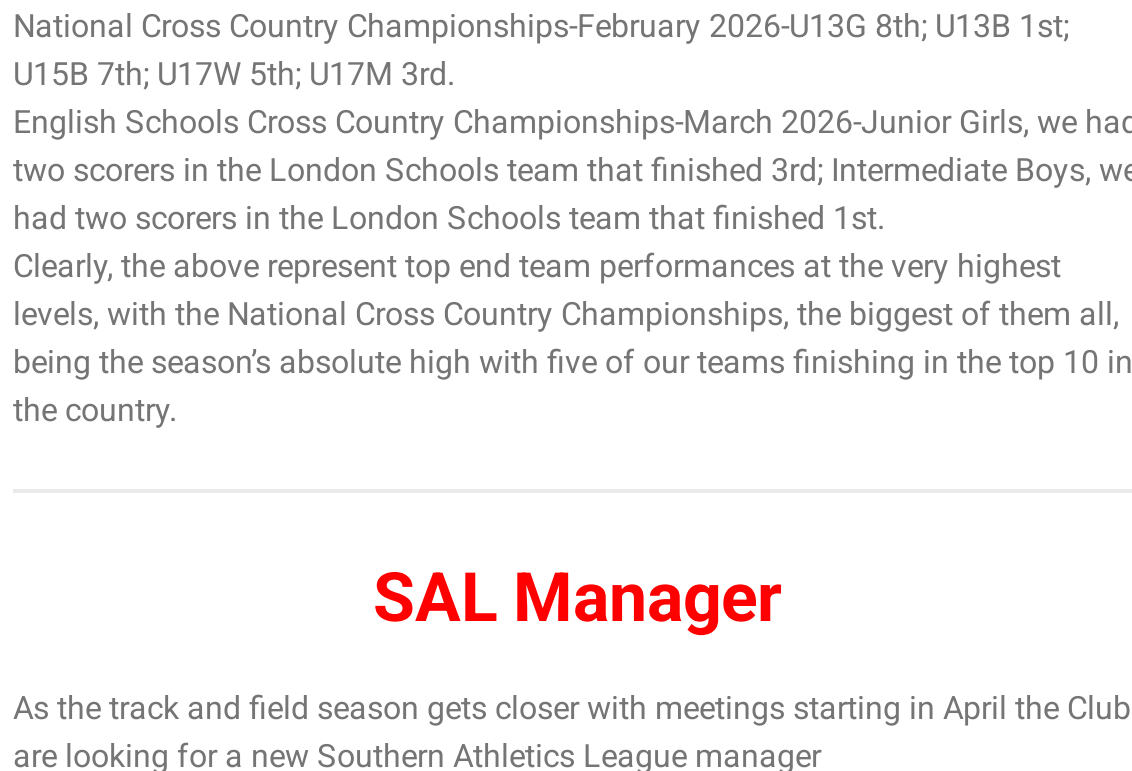
Another way to underline the current strength across the men's and women's distance sections at the Club, is to look at Club rankings. I've included below where things currently stand in 2026 for two distances (sincere apologies to any I have overlooked-they are not easily extractable from Pof10).

- Men's 5km**  
 Sam Bramwell 13.52  
 Arlo Ludewick 14.05  
 Daniel Shaw 14.36  
 Morgan Roberts 14.42  
 Ollie Mills 14.48  
 Tom O'Mahoney 14.53  
 Lewis Laylee 14.54  
 Fabian Whitelock 15.05  
 Thomas Patterson 15.15  
 Charlie Wood 15.17  
 Ryan Hickey 15.17  
 Ioan Jenkins 15.26
- Men's Half marathon**  
 Morgan Roberts 66.07  
 Sam Brashaw 66.45  
 Andrew Clarke 68.08  
 Liam Burthem 69.00  
 Ashley Gonclaves 69.04  
 Ross Brown 69.27  
 Matt Wood 69.27  
 Ollie Mills 69.39  
 Rowan Board 69.47  
 George Withers 69.47  
 Max Rose 70.23  
 Alex Russell 70.24  
 Ollie Sweett 70.26  
 Harry Roberts 70.30
- Women's 5km (includes park run and track 5000)**  
 Poppy Craig-McFeely 16.25  
 Sophie Tooley 16.35  
 Grace Leyland 17.15  
 Margaret Coogan 17.17  
 Darcie Hey 17.45  
 Aime Walker 17.45  
 Ro Hughes 17.46  
 Molly Smith 17.48  
 Rachel Gibson 17.53  
 Soraya Lockwood 17.59  
 Note 31.56 for Lucy Jones and 32.56 for Molly Smith for 10km
- Women's Half marathon**  
 Lucy Jones 72.57  
 Molly Smith 74.18  
 Katie Phipkin 78.59  
 Margaret Coogan 79.27  
 Leonie Biemolt 79.45  
 Antara Jain 79.52  
 Helena Keenan 81.03  
 Sarah Grover 81.24  
 Cali Brannan 84.35  
 Charlotte Davies 85.14  
 Megan Gildea 85.24  
 Jenny Nandi 86.12

Note 2.40.09 for Jessica Craig in Seville and Gaby Reynolds c1.20 at HM point in Essex 20

**Keith Newton, March 2026**

### Young athletes middle distance



A central feature of our success as a Club is our young athletes section, with almost half of our membership in the U18 age categories, contesting sprints, jumps, throws and distance. Over the years we have seen good throughput from our junior distance sections to senior squads, with Katie Snowden being our most high profile example. Others, such as Saskia Millard, who was in our silver medal winning team at the National Cross Country Relays and is combining running success with top level hyrox, have transitioned from James McDonald's group to become international athletes. Over this last winter the young athletes teams have, once again, had some outstanding successes, with highlights including:

- National Road Relays-October 25-U13G 8th; U13B 9th.
  - Southern Cross Country Relays-October 25-U13G 2nd.
  - National Cross Country Relays-November 25-U13G 4th; U15B 7th; U17M 4th.
  - Surrey County Cross Country Championships-January 2026-U13G 2nd; U13B 1st; U15B 3rd; U17W 3rd; U17M 1st.
  - Southern Cross Country Championships-January 26-U13G 2nd; U13B 2nd.
  - National Cross Country Championships-February 2026-U13G 8th; U13B 1st; U15B 7th; U17W 5th; U17M 3rd.
  - English Schools Cross Country Championships-March 2026-Junior Girls, we had two scorers in the London Schools team that finished 3rd; Intermediate Boys, we had two scorers in the London Schools team that finished 1st.
- Clearly, the above represent top end team performances at the very highest levels, with the National Cross Country Championships, the biggest of them all, being the season's absolute high with five of our teams finishing in the top 10 in the country.

### SAL Manager

As the track and field season gets closer with meetings starting in April the Club are looking for a new Southern Athletics League manager

The Southern Athletics League is for U17/20/senior and vet men and women. There are four matches during the summer – in our division all likely to be within the M25 including one home match

The league has a full range of events and plays a big part in the development of athletes to be able to peak for National Athletics League or individual competitions

Dates for this season are 16th May, 21st June, 19th July, 8th August with two likely to be at Tooting

The manager would be expected to liaise with coaches and athletes to select a team and notify them of venue, timetable and travel arrangements

Please contact **Steve Bosley** on 07721 555688 or info@hernehillharriers.org if you are interested or would like more details, we can split the role as required