

PRESTON HARRIERS BENEVOLENT FUND

INTRODUCTION

As a club, Preston Harriers recognises and values the contribution made by our membership, and has a commitment to care for and support our individual members. We appreciate the commitment shown by our active and competitive members, and also the contribution made by those who regularly volunteer, as trained officials and coaches, also helpers and officers, committee members etc.

We appreciate that our members are our most valuable asset, in whichever way they support our club. Without them, Preston Harriers would cease to function.

We also recognise that athletics can be a demanding sport, not only from a physical aspect, but also due to conflicting lifestyle demands, or costs. We recognise that on occasion athletes suffer injuries, which may require prolonged and costly treatment, without which, full and complete recovery and return to training and competition is impossible, and sadly, this can end the career of a successful or promising athlete.

Occasionally these demands or costs can affect a member's ability to contribute to the club, unfortunately resulting in the member choosing to give up their activity, resulting not only in personal disappointment, but also the loss of a valuable asset to Preston Harriers and the sport of athletics.

As a caring club we should do everything within our power to prevent this.

It may well be that some form of support from the club could assist our member, enabling them to continue their sport and involvement with Preston Harriers.

Under the Preston Harriers Benevolent Fund Scheme, when such hardships occur, the member concerned would have the opportunity to apply to the club for support via the benevolent fund.

The following conditions would need to be met prior to an application being considered.

- The applicant must have been a full member of Preston Harriers for at least a year, and have renewed their membership at least once.
- They must be of a good character, and have no previous breaches of the Club's or England Athletics' rules or codes of conduct.
- They must be able to demonstrate significant previous commitment and support to Preston Harriers.
- There must be evidence that this significant commitment and support is likely to continue for the foreseeable future.
- The benevolent fund will only be granted in exceptional circumstances, therefore the applicant must be able to demonstrate that they have explored all other reasonable options, and that approaching the club for assistance is seen as the 'last resort'.
- A member would only be able to submit one successful application within any 12 month period.
- The maximum amount of funding for any single application would be capped at £500.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE

- The Club Management Committee will appoint a Benevolent Fund Panel consisting of a Chairperson and 2 Panel Members. The function of the Panel will be to consider initial applications, and if considered favourable, to meet informally with the applicant to discuss their application in detail.
- The application to the benevolent fund must be made by the applicant (or parent/guardian if under 18) in writing, and be supported by a sponsor. The sponsor must be a full and reputable member of Preston Harriers, either the applicant's coach, or alternatively a qualified official, officer or committee member of the club.
- The application will be submitted to the Benevolent Fund Chairperson, who will distribute copies to Panel Members, who will then decide whether or not the application will be forwarded to the interview stage. If there is any doubt, then the application will be discussed further at the next available Management Committee meeting for final decision.
- If the application is deemed suitable, the applicant will be invited to meet and discuss their application with the Panel. The Panel will conduct interviews as required on a monthly basis, at least one week before the next scheduled monthly Management Committee meeting.
- The Panel may decide to meet the full costs of the application, make a partial contribution, or offer a loan to the applicant, at the discretion of the Panel.
- Following the discussion, a decision will be made by the Panel. This will be done by each Panel Member stating 'yes' or 'no' to the proposed action, with the Chairperson having the deciding vote.
- The decision of the Panel will be final, and as the fund is completely discretionary, no appeal process will be allowed.
- Benevolent fund decisions and awards will be notified to the Management Committee and administered as appropriate by the Club Treasurer. Where relevant, appropriate receipts must be submitted to the Treasurer by the applicant.