

Livelif

The magazine for HASSRA members



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HASSRA
Living Life 

Welcome to the Summer Edition of HASSRA Livelife!

I hope you're all enjoying the sunshine and finding time to relax and recharge with a well-earned break from work.

In this edition, I'm delighted to share highlights from our glittering Annual Awards Evening – a truly special celebration this year as we marked HASSRA's 90th Anniversary in style. It was a night to remember, filled with joy, recognition, and gratitude for the incredible contributions of our dedicated volunteers. HASSRA simply wouldn't be what it is without them, and this event was our chance to shine a spotlight on their achievements.

We were honoured to welcome our President, Sir Peter Schofield KCB, along with members of the Senior Leadership Team, who graciously presented the awards and added an extra touch of prestige to the evening.

You'll find a selection of photos from the event in this issue, and if you'd like to see the full album, head over to: www.flickr.com

Also in this edition, personal reflections from a member who visited the Beamish Museum, an inspiring story of running the London Marathon with support from the HASSRA Development Fund and a cultural feature on Artists in Public Service.

We've got news of an exciting members-only offer for a Fred. Olsen Cruise in 2026, and I'm thrilled to announce an upcoming competition where three lucky members will each win a pair of tickets for the luxurious "Green Spain" cruise. To give you a taste of what's in store, we've included a member's account of their cruise experience – prepare to be tempted!



There's plenty more to enjoy, so dive in and make the most of this summer edition.

Happy reading!

Jacky Sneddon
Editor

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MIND OVER MILES:

One Runner's Journey to the London Marathon

By Chloe Brown

For many, running a marathon is the ultimate test of endurance. For me, the London Marathon became more than just a race – it was a transformative journey of resilience, purpose, and community.

Over the past few years, I've grown to love running not only as a physical pursuit but as a powerful mental challenge. Each mile is a lesson in perseverance, each run a reminder that strength often comes from within. But as my passion deepened, so did the financial demands. From race entries and specialist gear to nutrition and recovery tools, the costs quickly added up.

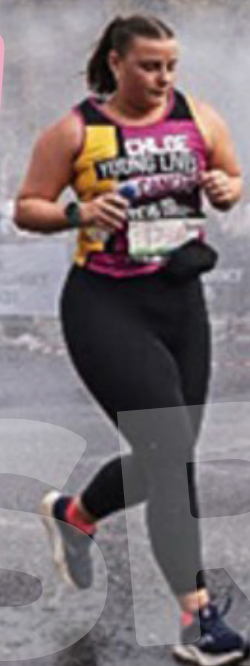
That's when I discovered the HASSRA Development Fund. Designed to support individuals in their sporting and coaching ambitions, the fund offered a lifeline. I applied and was thrilled to receive £250 in support. This funding helped cover race fees and invest in essential equipment – tools that not only enhanced my training but also helped prevent injury and speed up recovery. With this support, I was able to expand my race portfolio and prepare more effectively for the big day.

Running the London Marathon in support of Young Lives vs Cancer was a deeply personal mission. Over two years, I've raised nearly £5,000 for the charity – each donation a testament to the power of community and compassion. Race day itself was unforgettable. Despite the heat, I pushed through every mile, driven by purpose and pride. Crossing the finish line wasn't just a physical achievement – it was proof that I could overcome any challenge.

Thanks to HASSRA, I was able to chase a dream and support a cause close to my heart. Their encouragement didn't stop at the finish line – they've even welcomed a future application to help me pursue a 'Coach in Running' qualification.

This journey has shown me that with the right support, determination, and a little help along the way, we're all capable of extraordinary things.

[Click here](#) for more information about the HASSRA Development Fund and how to apply.



A NIGHT TO REMEMBER

HASSRA Celebrates 90 Years of Community and Commitment

The stunning Slate building at Warwick University set the stage for a joyful evening as volunteers and guests celebrated a year of dedication and hard work, along with the 90th Anniversary of HASSRA. Over 200 attendees gathered to honour our volunteers who organise activities that promote wellbeing and connection, making DWP a great place to work.

The atmosphere was warm and lively, filled with appreciation. HASSRA President, Sir Peter Schofield KCB, praised the volunteers' commitment, while Senior Leaders presented awards. Neil Couling entertained the crowd as always with his signature dance moves and energy.

Guests explored HASSRA's rich history through lovingly curated photo books and displays, showcasing decades of memories, milestones, and achievements. The exhibits offered a nostalgic look back at the organisation's vibrant and active past.

The event was more than a celebration – it was a tribute to HASSRA's enduring legacy and community spirit. As music played and the dance floor filled, the passion of its volunteers shone through, leaving a lasting impression on everyone who attended.

MAJOR AWARD	WINNER	HIGHLY COMMENDED
First Vice-President's Cup Best Large Club	Sheffield & Rotherham HASSRA Yorkshire and the Humber	Sunderland HASSRA North East
Sir Michael Partridge Trophy Best Small Club	Kings Lynn, Wisbech & Fakenham HASSRA HASSRA East of England	Hemsworth HASSRA Yorkshire and the Humber HASSRA Southport HASSRA North West
Sir Leigh Lewis Trophy Best Arts, Crafts & Non-Sporting Contributor	Liam Willis HASSRA South East	
Rachel Lomax Trophy Best Volunteer	Sharon Finan HASSRA London	Sarah Tully HASSRA North West Sophie Robertson HASSRA Wales
Lesley Strathie Trophy Best Business Sponsor	Gareth Niblett HASSRA West Midlands	Marie Hull HASSRA North East
President's Cup Best Regional Association	HASSRA South West	HASSRA North West
Andy Graham Trophy Best Newcomer	Sarah Euden HASSRA Wales	Sarah Giles HASSRA North East
John Nunn Trophy Best Single Activity Club	West Midlands Trips HASSRA West Midlands	
Terry Green Trophy Best Sports Person	Pauline Long HASSRA North East	
Sir Robert Devereux Trophy Wellbeing	Birkenhead CSAC HASSRA North West	Leeds Quarry House HASSRA Yorkshire and the Humber
Sir Peter Schofield Trophy Best Innovation	Fylde Gardening Club HASSRA Fylde	Steven Huntley & Tyler King HASSRA South West
Neil Couling Trophy Best Recruitment Club	Joint Winners North Star UCR & Swindon S&S HASSRA South West	
The Cinema Society Trophy Most new Regional Cinema Members	HASSRA West Midlands	

Congratulations also go to our Merit Award Winners. Maggie Ritchie (HASSRA Scotland), Nigel Thomas (HASSRA South East) and Tracy Champion (HASSRA South East).

The 2024 HASSRA Heroes are David Telford (East Midlands), Paula Burman (East of England), Christine Fisher (Fylde), Brian Gordon (London), Danny Cooper (North West), Donna Mcpherson (Scotland), Lisa Kerridge-Butler (South East), Lynne Thomas (Wales), Paula Flatman (West Midlands) and Brian Dickinson (Yorkshire and The Humber)



Leading by Example

HASSRA Business Sponsor 2024

By Gareth Niblett

I've been a HASSRA member since day one of joining the Department back in 2002. It's fair to say I didn't really know what I was signing up to that day, as I signed everything put in front of me at induction - union membership, Sports Council form and of course HASSRA - 23 years later it's the only membership I'm still signed up to. Why? Well put simply HASSRA is a first-class association, which offers something for everyone - fantastic savings, events and activities, competitions and of course the HASSRA Lottery, though I'm still waiting to scoop the £20,000 first prize on that!

"HASSRA Shrewsbury club has gone from strength to strength winning the regional Best Small Club for 5 consecutive years"

In 2013, I set up the HASSRA Shrewsbury club in the West Midlands. It's gone from strength to strength since its inception, winning the regional Best Small Club for 5 consecutive years between 2019 and 2023 and Best National Small Club in 2019.

As the Business Sponsor my role isn't just about making sure the club operates correctly, it's about being actively involved and leading from the front - putting forward suggestions, helping to organise activities, buying prizes and even selling a few raffle tickets. Balancing the role alongside a busy day job within the Department can be challenging, but I've always made sure that I set aside time each month to attend committee meetings and create an agenda focused on what we want to achieve. I've also dedicated a significant amount of my own personal time outside of work to create newsletters and advertise events and competitions on HASSRA Live, to ensure the club operates successfully and has activities taking place every single month of the year.

Being a Business Sponsor is about making sure your club plays a significant part in making our DWP sites a great place to work, where colleagues enjoy coming into the office. Our work as a Department is often demanding, yet HASSRA does fantastic things to contribute to the Department's wellbeing agenda and to increase staff morale and engagement. HASSRA clubs do fantastic things to benefit colleagues in our DWP offices - and not just our offices, but also the communities in which we work. Last year for example, in the West Midlands our network of local clubs raised over £17,000 for charity - a phenomenal figure!

There are over 300 local HASSRA clubs across the country, each with their own Business Sponsor - for me to be awarded the Business Sponsor of the Year Award for 2024 is a fantastic achievement and one I am incredibly proud of. The benefits of having a local office HASSRA club are evident for all to see, and I'd encourage any office that does not have one to get in touch with your regional HASSRA team to set one up and take advantage of the funds available to members locally.

For any HASSRA club to succeed you need the buy in and continued support from local leaders - without that a club simply won't be able to function.

To find out more about the role of the Business Sponsor, please [click here](#).



A NIGHT TO SHINE – AND TO GIVE BACK

It was a pleasure to be invited to this year's **HASSRA Awards** and be part of the 90th Anniversary celebrations. Thank you to everyone who purchased a raffle ticket and helped raise an incredible £1,054.

Your support means we can be here for current, former and retired civil servants when they face tough times. From mental health struggles and financial assistance to relationship issues, getting through grief, and coping with disability. We're here to help people stay strong, whatever life brings.

We look forward to seeing you all again next year and raising even more.



10% discount* on home insurance for all HASSRA members!

CSIS are delighted to announce a **10% discount** on home insurance for all HASSRA members. Call us today for a quote (Mon-Fri 9-5pm). Please just quote 'HASSRA' and we'll do the rest!

*Only available when calling CSIS for a quotation. Discount only applies when cover is offered with our provider Salvation Army General Insurance Corporation Ltd (sagic).

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Rated 4.8 out of 5



All Aboard!

HASSRA Sets Sail with Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines

HASSRA is thrilled to announce an exclusive new offer in partnership with Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines – and it's one you won't want to miss! In August 2026, members will have the chance to embark on a 5-day cruise departing from Southampton, sailing to the lush and vibrant shores of Green Spain. Discounted prices start at just £549 per person for an interior cabin (based on two people sharing).

This exciting voyage promises stunning coastal views, rich culture, and unforgettable memories – all wrapped up in the comfort and elegance of a Fred. Olsen Cruise. Whether you're a seasoned traveller or a first-time cruiser, this is the perfect opportunity to unwind, explore, and connect with fellow HASSRA members. For more information and to make a booking please click...

HASSRA Group Cruise

But that's not all...

To celebrate this fantastic new offer, HASSRA will soon be launching a competition where three lucky winners will each receive a pair of tickets to join this incredible cruise – absolutely free! That's right: you and a guest could be setting sail for Green Spain in style, courtesy of HASSRA and Fred. Olsen.

Whether you're dreaming of tapas in the sun, strolls along Spanish harbours, or simply relaxing on deck

with a sea breeze in your hair, this is one offer you won't want to miss.

Details on how to enter the competition will be announced soon, so keep an eye on your inbox, the HASSRA website, and our social media channels. This is your chance to cruise with a splash in 2026!

Get ready to pack your bags – HASSRA is going cruising!

HASSRA Member Michael Thomas experienced the delights of a Fred. Olsen Cruise when he took advantage of the offer to the Christmas Markets River Cities cruise, and here's what he had to say.

"My recent Fred. Olsen Christmas cruise was nothing short of magical, thanks to the incredible deal arranged by HASSRA. From start to finish, the experience was fantastic. The ship was beautifully decorated, the festive atmosphere was infectious, and the staff were wonderful. We had a truly amazing time enjoying all the onboard facilities and Christmas cheer."



Huge thanks to HASSRA for securing such a brilliant deal – the cruise was a dream come true, and I thoroughly recommend both Fred. Olsen and HASSRA to any member looking for a getaway."

Well Michael – you and Violet will be pleased to learn that HASSRA has indeed partnered with Fred. Olsen again to secure the best of deals for our members, to visit the best of places, at the best of times and in the best of companies.



**Fred. Olsen
Cruise Lines**



ARTISTS IN PUBLIC SERVICE:

A Creative Legacy Since 1930

By Andrew Cooper



The roots of our art club stretch back to 1930, when the Association of Civil Service Arts Clubs was first established – uniting a number of creative groups across the Civil Service. In 2000, we welcomed artists from the Civil Service Retirement Fellowship, and from this evolution, Artists in Public Service was born.

Today, we are a vibrant, inclusive, and not-for-profit organisation open to everyone – regardless of whether you work in the public sector. If you're over 18 and passionate about the fine or applied arts, you're welcome to join our creative community.

Our mission is simple: to encourage the appreciation and practice of the visual arts. Members enjoy a range of benefits, including:

- **An annual exhibition** at the Peggy Jay Gallery in Burgh House, Hampstead, where members can showcase and sell their work at accessible prices.
- **A newsletter**, keeping members connected and inspired with updates, stories, and opportunities.
- **An annual UK-based art holiday**, offering the chance to paint, learn, and relax in convivial surroundings with fellow artists.

While our history dates back nearly a century, it wasn't until 1952 that our first newsletter was published. In that inaugural issue, the Chairman wrote: "It is not sufficient to sit back and merely watch these clubs develop by themselves." That spirit of active engagement and community has guided us ever since, helping our network of artists thrive through decades of change in both the Civil Service and wider society.

As we look ahead to our centenary in 2030, we're excited to welcome new members into our fold. Whether you're a seasoned artist or just starting out, we'd love for you to be part of our journey.

To learn more or to join us, visit: **Artists in Public Service - Established in 1930**

COMPETITION TIME

– A Little Less Conversation, A Lot More Action!

Get ready to shake, rattle and roll! We're giving away **six pairs of tickets** to the electrifying **Elvis Evolution immersive experience in London** – where the King lives on in spectacular style. And that's not all... each winning pair will also receive **£100 in cash** to spend however they like. Whether you're All Shook Up or just Can't Help Falling in Love with Elvis, this is your chance to experience the magic like never before.



ELVIS
EVOLUTION
THE IMMERSIVE EXPERIENCE



Don't miss out –
it's Now or Never!

Win a Pair of Tickets to Elvis Evolution at Immerse LDN, ExCel Waterfront, London

Nature Nurtured: Peel Park's Green Mission

by Helen Hoban

The "Give Nature a Home" Club at Peel Park was founded with a clear mission: to protect, encourage, and celebrate the rich wildlife that calls our site home. Our club offers members:

- A chance to learn about local habitats and wider conservation efforts
- Opportunities to boost wellbeing through nature-based activities
- Inclusive participation in conservation projects for all abilities

Our core objectives focus on protecting, reintroducing, and sustaining natural wildlife on site. We proudly align our efforts with the DWP Greening Government agenda, and we're thrilled to see our biodiversity score at Peel Park steadily rising – a testament to the passion and commitment of our members.

A Year of Growth and Impact

Throughout 2024, we worked hard to raise awareness of our club, growing our membership to over 60 at one point. We hosted information stalls, led guided nature walks, and introduced new feeding stations and birdboxes. We also took steps to enhance our natural ponds and supported the No Mow May initiative – helping protect our site's rare Bee Orchids and Marsh Orchids.

Recognition and Rewards

We were absolutely delighted to be named **Single Activity Club of the Year** – a proud moment that recognised the dedication of our members. The award came with a welcome £100 prize, which, along with £90 from the HASSRA 90 celebrations, has helped us upgrade our birdboxes and keep our feathered friends well fed.

As a small token of appreciation, we've named one of our new birdboxes "**HASSRA90**" – the name will be painted on once the breeding season ends, so we don't disturb any current residents!

Despite some members relocating to the new Fylde View site in Blackpool town centre, we're excited to build on our success and continue making Peel Park a thriving haven for nature.



If your club hasn't applied for its 90th Anniversary Club Grant, there is still time, for more information please see [here](#).



Celebrating 90 Years of Fun, Challenges & Prizes!

At HASSRA, we love creating quizzes, competitions and puzzles that challenge our members - and reward them with fantastic prizes!

To mark the 90th Anniversary, we've gone bigger and better with new competitions and even bigger prize pots. If you haven't won yet, don't worry—there are still plenty of chances coming your way!

Here's what 2025 has looked like so far:

6 Smart Quizzes with a total payout of **£11,250**

13 Puzzles with over **£5,000 in prizes**

7 Competitions with a whopping **70,000 entries** and **96 winners** sharing nearly **£16,000** – not to mention the special free ticket competitions provided by The Cinema Society and Merlin.

Our "**Win it Wednesdays**" in July have been a huge hit! Each week, 5 lucky winners get to choose their own **£100 prize voucher** – and there's more to come.

Make sure you're in the loop! Check your profile settings to ensure you're signed up to receive **HASSRA** emails – so you never miss a chance to win.