

Battersea Ironsides Rugby Football Club (BIRFC) Annual General Meeting
Wednesday 30th September.
Election: Officers of the Club

The following five candidates, listed in alphabetical order, have been nominated to stand for election as one of the four elected Committee Members of BIRFC under Rules 15.1.3 and 9.4:

- Mike Crofts
- Kathleen Frost
- Zoe Goodwin
- Ross Lynham-Carter
- Simon Wardley

Please note that there will be neither candidate presentations nor membership Q&A's at the AGM.

Mike Crofts

Being part of a community club like Ironsides is a huge privilege. As a member of the management committee my focus is on the amazingly positive work that we do in the community; be it expanding girls and ladies rugby, widening participation in the game, enabling great rugby or just being a reliable and solid community that is so important for many members who value the community ethos of our club.

Since joining the club in 2014 I have been involved with every section, playing across the senior men's sides, coaching an Under15 team through to Colts and now in my role as Ladies Co-head coach. I am proud to support sections which go from strength to strength.

As a volunteer club with limited real estate, we will always face challenges. But we can be proud of what the club does in the community, and what many members have achieved in the past few decades. I am so impressed by the contribution that volunteers across the club make to local causes, such as supporting the official charities, the Dons foodbank and the Movember campaign.

Looking ahead, we must be clear on the strategy for continuing this development, but not at the expense of the ethos of this community club. I believe we must continue our role of community leadership, all whilst providing fantastic rugby for over a thousand members.

Kathleen Frost

I've been with Ironsides Rugby since 2012 and have been proud to be part of a team that has worked together to build the club to what it is today. When I started out as the club's first physiotherapist (taking over from Smuggler and his trusty bucket and magic sponge) Ironsides were in Surrey 2, with only 3 senior men's teams. Today, not only have the 1's gained promotion all the way to London 1 (with a vase win on the way), the Seniors' section has expanded out to include 5 men's teams, 2 ladies teams and a Vets team, and the juniors section continues to grow each year. All of this could not have been possible without the army of support staff, and I happily count myself amongst those ranks. As a result of this fantastic growth throughout the club, the need for medical support has also grown, and I have worked over the years to establish the senior physiotherapy team, which now consists of

10 physiotherapists who work tirelessly to look after the senior teams. Last season we extended our reach to also include the colts and U16s. The team supports the players not only on match days, but also to get back on the pitch following injury. This is in addition to the numerous first aiders working to support the juniors and minis.

Over the past couple of years, I have also been part of the newly formed first aid/wellbeing committee which has sought to provide a joined up and consistent approach to looking after the players across all age groups. Through this committee, we have been able to arrange training for more first aiders, taping training, education to raise awareness on the effects of concussion and the installation of the AEDs. Next steps are to provide a greater emphasis on wellbeing throughout the club.

As a sports club, player wellbeing should be one of our core values, and I feel that having specific medical/wellbeing representation on the management committee will help reinforce and strengthen this value. As well as being a trained physiotherapist, I have an extensive background in public health and want to use these skills to benefit the Ironsides. I aim to advocate for the players (and volunteers) physical, emotional and social needs across all the age groups. Bringing structure to this area and working as One Club will show our members the club's commitment back to them. Without the players, the club wouldn't exist and we owe it to them to look after them. The club has gone from strength to strength over the years and I want it to continue to do so – in a positive and healthy way!

Zoe Goodwin

Hi everyone - I'm Zoe - current Minis Secretary with just one year under my belt!

I'm really invested in the Minis - Charlie, my son, is just going into U8s, and so this is my third year as Age Group Manager - the largest group in the Club! My better half Gooders is the Head Coach as well. This first year on the Committees has been quite a ride! Navigating the JMC, MC and, not least, hundreds of WhatsApp groups has been challenging, but great fun. For the most part it's been really enjoyable, and very rewarding. Turns out I love a challenge! And winning!

With much help, I managed to pull together the submission for Wandsworth Club of the Year - which we won! And the Gallagher Club of the Season - which we're going to win, I hope! And then loads of the World Cup 2019 press and fun and games - which we didn't win. But Ironsides were on the telly a lot! Moving on!

I'm super keen to stay with my Age Group - it's a family affair, and I love that I can be part of Charlie's rugby club and our Sunday family fun. But also, being part of the Junior Committee is wonderful, and getting so many kids from the local area out to play rugby each weekend is hugely rewarding. I've driven lots of the initiatives with our Social Media, Sponsorship, Pre-Loved Kit pages and the Welcome to Ironsides pack.

It was just a fabulous first weekend of Return to Rugby, and wonderful to see Wandsworth covered in our Ironsides' colours. It was no mean feat, but the junior team pulled together as a team and got us back where we belong on a Sunday morning!

To be honest, I was surprised to be voted onto the Management Committee last year, and I never imagined there would be so many hours and hours of Zoom calls over the last six months for a Rugby Club!

But actually over the last twelve months, I think - I hope - I've made a positive impact, and most of all, got loads of stuff done! These committees do love a chat! So, organisation, a bit of Comms & PR and

some action - AND a less stereotypical Rugby Club committee member: that's what I can bring again this year.

Looking forward post-Covid, I hope our Minis can look forward to some Quins days out, another Tour to Minehead, perhaps another visit to Twickenham and its Museum, local Club friendlies and more collaboration with local schools to introduce rugby to them. Maybe even our own Ironsides Minis Festival! But most of all, hopefully fun, happy families, a pint, and some light-hearted banter. It is a rugby club, after all!

Ross Lynham-Carter

This is my 7th season with the Ironsides, 2nd season as 3rd XV skipper and my first as club captain. Over those 7 seasons the Ironsides has given me a huge amount both on and off the pitch, and I've valued every second of it. Due to being given so much by the club I took the role as club captain to try and give something back to the club, not just the seniors but all sections.

It's really important to me that we continue to build on the momentum we have established around identifying and promoting the fantastic talent that the mini and youth sections are producing, which has been a key driver in the seniors recent success. Furthermore, it's vital that we continue to build on all the one club work that has already taken place to ensure that every member has a club where they can maximise their potential, continue to help their local community and most importantly ensure they have fun playing rugby with their friends week in, week out. It's really important that this one club view has a place on the committee.

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Simon Wardley

I am a former Ironsides player (1983-1997) and was thrilled to receive a Cap at the 75th anniversary Dinner for over 100 First XV appearances – at least, after all the Wine, I think that was what it was for !

Perhaps what has given me the most pride, however, is watching my Daughter playing for the Ladies XV and seeing her enjoy the camaraderie of a Club with so much heart.

I am hugely proud of what Ironsides Rugby stands for and what has been achieved – including Rugby activities that simply didn't exist in my time. I have seen so many Clubs that we used to play against either struggle or even fold, so I know how much the growth of the Junior section means to our future success.

I don't pretend to have any grand plans or to want to make big changes within the Club, but I do like to think I can help as a friendly face around the Club, keen to see the various sections of this fantastic family working together to take us forwards - and have fun doing it.