

## **Club History:**

The present Edinburgh Athletic Club was formed in 2007 through an amalgamation of Edinburgh's two most successful clubs The City of Edinburgh Athletics Club and Edinburgh Southern Harriers (Women).

The City of Edinburgh Athletic Club was formed in 1996 through a previous amalgamation of Edinburgh Athletic Club and Edinburgh Southern Harriers (Men).

Both Clubs enjoyed a tradition within Scottish Athletics and both have their roots in the 19th century when Queen Victoria was on the throne and travel was at a much slower pace with horse-drawn transport.

Athletic clubs served different areas of the city and this was often reflected in the club's name.

This did not apply to Edinburgh Harriers, being the first club in the City in 1885, they had no rivals, none-the-less they did serve the Western side of the town.

Edinburgh Northern Harriers followed in 1889 and then Edinburgh Southern Harriers in 1897.

Cannon Athletic Club was formed in 1922 but changed their name to Edinburgh Eastern Harriers in 1934, thus closing the square.

Clubs had existed before 1885 but were not open to the populous at large, being more associated with fee-paying schools and the University.

The 'Harrier' clubs opened up athletics to the working class and because it was easy and cheap to take part, as reflected in the name cross-country running proved to be very popular.

Edinburgh Harriers, Northern and Eastern all had a strong Boys' Brigade tradition within their clubs and perhaps it was this bond which made them come together in 1961 to form Edinburgh Athletic Club, although the new club also embraced a successful Rover Scout based club 'Braidburn AC' founded in 1947.

Edinburgh Harriers were the only one of these four clubs to have a Ladies Section and this has continued with Edinburgh AC

Edinburgh Southern Harriers name, on the other hand, remained consistent after it changed its title from 'Athletic Club' to Harriers in 1898.

The men's section temporarily changed their name to Caledon Park Harriers and the women's section changed theirs to Edinburgh Woollen Mill to reflect the sponsorship they were enjoying at that time.

In 1995, negotiations began between Edinburgh Southern Harriers (men) and Edinburgh Athletic Club with a view to a merger, both clubs had done extremely well in British League competitions but over the years it had become apparent that for demographic reasons and the growing financial pressure of travel and accommodation, that in order to maintain standards and aspire to success, a merger was in both clubs best interests.

In 2006 negotiations began between Edinburgh Southern Harriers (women) and City of Edinburgh Athletic Club with a view to a merger. The women's section of the Harriers had continued to compete successfully under the Edinburgh Southern name, winning the Women's UK division I title. The Clubs amalgamated in 2007 and it was decided to name the club Edinburgh Athletic Club.



The clubs have tasted great success over the century and have produced very many Scottish and several British champions.

Pride of place however must go to Wyndham Halswelle, Olympic 400m champion (London 1908) and to Allan Wells, Olympic 100m champion (Moscow 1980), members of Edinburgh Harriers and Edinburgh Southern Harriers respectively, who have written their names into the history of the sport.

The transition to the present club was exceedingly smooth with an immediate good relationship between officials and athletes. This was not surprising as several shared coaches and many trained at the same facilities.