



## **FRISKIS&SVETTIS ABERDEEN**

### **ANNUAL REPORT 2007**

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## **1. Introduction**

2007 was an exciting and interesting year for our Association. F&S Aberdeen is part of a continually expanding group and it is projected that this year we will reach 500,000 members across Scandinavia and Europe. For our part we ran a local campaign to boost our membership that has been fairly successful.

Another highlight for us this year is the qualification of our first male Leader, Gavin Hawick who has successfully trained in Stockholm and Brussels.

## **2. Who are Friskis&Svettis Aberdeen?**

### **2.1 The Committee**

Friskis&Svettis Aberdeen is run by the Committee who comprise:

Chairperson	Beverlie Welo
Vice Chairperson	Christine Richardson
Secretary	Gordon Whyte
Treasurer	James Wilson
Committee Member	Jenny Chapman

Kate Pedelty also patiently attends Committee Meetings in her role as Venue co-ordinator. Each member of the Committee has been delegated different tasks and we have all worked diligently to ensure the smooth running of our Association. Gordon has proved invaluable translating documents that we receive from Sweden and Jenny continues to wear two hats, one for the Committee and the other for the Publicity Committee. A big “thank you” also to John Greig and Alan Copland for attending many of the Committee Meetings this year due to absenteeism of other Committee members. We have met four times this year but we have managed to solve most issues via emailing rather than setting up impromptu meetings and this has worked very well. Some of our key objectives this year were to increase our membership base, train suitable candidates to become Leaders and to publicise the F&S name. Whilst all these objectives have been met they also remain ongoing in order to expand the Association further.

### **2.2 Leaders & Leader Training**

Some of our Leaders have taken time out and even with new Leader training, we still remain with a core of 16 active Leaders. However we have increased our venue choice and currently offer 44 classes throughout the Aberdeen area. Leaders meet quarterly at Leader Forums to discuss issues directly affecting personal development and the development of the Association.

### **Programme Follow-Ups**

As part of our stringent F&S continuing development programme, eleven Leaders underwent a programme follow-up by educators from F&S Riks in Sweden in January 2008. For Gavin, our new medium Leader, this was his Diploma Jym. For the rest it was a normal programme follow-up. All the leaders passed and received certificates. It should be noted that the two educators from Sweden complimented Aberdeen on its very high standard of Leaders and quality of programmes once again and added that Aberdeen was their favourite foreign Association! New programmes put together at other times of the year are followed up via a DVD sent to Sweden.

### **Svettisdagarna**

Ongoing Leader education is paramount to a Leaders' development so that they continue to offer inspiring, well thought out, functional, effective, fun programmes whatever the intensity. One of the ways that is offered to us, as part of Friskis&Svettis, is the opportunity to attend Svettisdagarna (The Sweaty Days!). This is a conference for Leaders held every November, at which there are a wide variety of sessions to attend, designed and targeted at inspiring and

stimulating the Leaders. There are some guest speakers and presenters but most of it is done 'in house' by the best educators and Leaders from Friskis&Svettis. They aim to challenge us and make us think in different ways using new angles in music and exercise, Leader presence and Leadership skills, updates on current theory topics and chances to try new types of programmes.

This year was no exception and we were not disappointed. Six Leaders went to Stockholm and it was all go from start to finish. Unfortunately we couldn't take part in the theory sessions as they were all in Swedish, but the practical sessions were second to none! Large and small groups and all shapes and types of Leaders were there – a sea of red and white T shirts! Sessions that really stood out were 'River Deep Mountain High' aimed at making the most of the energy in the music and use of expression: Circkeljym using weights and stations in a gym environment and Pass nu, a new type of education which uses master classes at different intensities to inspire leaders to be more creative. This year four of us also did an outdoor session – Stjarman – the star man, where runners, joggers and Nordic walkers all train in the same class, coming together to work at stations set up with only minimal equipment making full use of what is naturally around us in the park.

Svettisdagarna is a fantastic educational experience, a chance to meet up with old friends and make new ones and to put Friskis&Svettis Aberdeen well and truly on the map!

### **In-House Training**

F&S Aberdeen have also organised their own in-house training days. Gavin underwent a 'Top Up' course, which includes everything you need to know about setting up classes in Aberdeen. Viking Hiking had their annual Training Day and in November we had a Leaders Inspirational Day where Leaders showed part of their programme followed by informal discussions.

### **Masterclasses**

As part of our ongoing development, Maria Jakobsson and Emma Jonnson gave us two Medium Masterclasses during our weekend in January. This was attended by Leaders and class members and proved to be very inspirational. Leaders also attended a workshop on agility, flexibility.

### **Courses**

As well as visits from our Swedish counterparts, some of our Leaders make private trips to Sweden for personal development. This year was no exception and Jackie Richardson went to Stockholm in August 2007 to attend the 'Start' course (with Gunilla kindly translating). 'Start' is exactly what it suggests. A class for people who have never exercised before or who want to start exercise after ill health or injury. It is designed to last approximately six weeks before participants move on to the next level, i.e. senior, basic etc.

### **New Leader Training**

One of our long term goals set at the 2005 AGM was to send more candidates to Sweden for Leader Training to help expand our association. This year we were delighted that Gavin Hawick took up the challenge and attended the Phase 1 Leader Course in Stockholm and Phase 2 in Brussels. He passed the theory section and his Diploma Gym to become our very first male Friskis&Svettis Leader in Aberdeen. Gavin wasted no time in setting up his own classes starting on Valentines Day at St Clements Church Hall in Mastrick where he is successfully building up his own membership base. He also covers for other Leaders. It should be noted that the cost of sending a candidate on Phase 1 and 2 has increased yet again because of the travelling involved and the course costs. The Leader pays £500 of this fee and our Association pays the rest.

## **2.3 Election Committee**

The Election Committee is made up of Jackie Richardson as Chairman, Elizabeth Whyte and Karen Grant. Their role is crucial in scouting for potential candidates to join the Committee. They also try to involve as many members as possible to help the Association, be it IT skills, PR work etc! The Election Committee continues to survey our members to discover their likes or dislikes about how the Association is run and analyse any suggestions for improvement.

## **2.4 Publicity Committee**

The Publicity Committee has been very busy this year. They have produced two glossy colour leaflets that are on general distribution – one for Viking Hiking and one for General Information. The Information Pack is currently being updated and re-presented in a different format for future members. Pull-up banners are being sourced to display our Logo and website address at public events.

## **2.5 Viking Hiking**

All VH sessions at Dobbies and Duthie Park/Sea Beach Esplanade continued to be very well supported throughout the year. There was a record number of 28 walkers participating on Friday 25 January at Dobbies! More new faces continue to appear and many become regular walkers. Inverurie sessions are low on numbers, but Sandy Forbes is still enthusiastically giving his all! The monthly long walks have been well supported and enjoyed by members and guests. Somehow the weather has been very kind to us on each occasion and we have hopes of further good days away. A programme of similar walks is planned for the coming months. On 2 June 2007 a 45 strong party walked through the Lairig Ghru pass from Speyside to Deeside. About two thirds were our own members augmented by guest walkers. The day was declared a success and a similar outing is planned this year through Glen Tilt.

During the summer all VH Leaders were 'Luffed' by Gunilla. An Annual Refresher Day was also held. In November VH Leaders attended an Aberdeen First Aid School one-day course and received 'Appointed Persons (First Aid)' certificates. A set of two walkie-talkie radios with a 3 mile range was acquired for longer walks, which have already proved invaluable equipment.

## **2.6 Open Doors**

Open Doors has had somewhat mixed fortunes this year. On the plus side, despite various transport and health problems, not one session of Open Doors has been missed. We have gained new participants, as well as retaining our stalwarts and our Host, David, has proved himself as invaluable, as ever. On a sad note we lost one of our longstanding class members who died after a short spell in hospital. This was the first time the group had had to face that sort of situation and it was a difficult time.

We have had a number of visitors this year; Christine – our Vice Chairperson came to visit us, as did Jackie Leiper with son Fraser and our new Leader, Gavin. Kate Pedelty took on responsibility for distributing our leaflet to organisations we thought would be interested in our programme and we have had some positive feedback from this ongoing initiative.

The Stonehaven class is now in its 4<sup>th</sup> year at Carronhill with numbers slowly increasing. However, without an ambulant Leader, delivering the programme is difficult and if it were not for the continuing support of our Host, Eleanor Ronald, it would not be possible to have a programme that included floor exercises.

## **2.7 Members**

We are pleased to say that we had 908 members by the end of 2007. This is up on last year thanks to our membership recruitment campaign, but it has to be noted that for every member we gain we seem to lose one along the way for various reasons, be it relocation, illness etc. However our membership base continues to steadily grow and we hope 2008 will see us top the 1000 mark. Sweden and Norway make up the bulk of F&S members, Helsinki comes next with about 1600 members, then it's us! Patti Simmons has, once again, done a sterling job as Membership Secretary that includes keeping a register of members and issuing membership cards.

### **3. International Cooperation**

It has been somewhat quiet on the International Cooperation front this year. On the back of the AGM 2007 in Sweden, Riks put together a working group they named 'Team 5' to deal with Associations outside Sweden and Norway. Each association had to fill in a questionnaire in September 2007 ranking issues of importance in relation to our expectations from F&S Riks. Once all this information was collated Riks came up with a proposal to be presented at their AGM in April 2008. We await the outcome of this proposal.

Since the AGM in Sweden, the International Groups took a step back and have not met since. However since we found our meetings with the other International Groups informative and we had a sense of mutual co-operation it is hoped that a new sense of confidence will be in place after the 2008 AGM and we are already talking about meeting up again later this year.

### **4. Goals 2007**

- To send candidates to the New Leaders Course Stage 1 Stockholm, Stage 2 Brussels. Completed.
- Programme Follow-Ups – to bring educators over from Sweden – January 2007. Completed.
- For as many Leaders as possible to visit Sweden and attend Svettisdagarna – November 2007. Completed.
- To encourage Leaders to undertake specialised Courses held throughout the year in Sweden. E.g. Start Course. Completed.
- Target younger people to become members. Has anyone any good ideas? Ongoing.
- Increase our membership base. Ongoing.
- Generate more local publicity. Ongoing.
- Gain recognition nationally of the Friskis&Svettis qualification so that we will be allowed to offer F&S classes in all public and private clubs in Aberdeen and the UK. Ongoing.
- To find new and accessible venues for our classes. Ongoing.

### **5. Communications and Service**

#### **5.1 Information Pack for Members**

Our Information Pack is being completely revamped before it goes for reprinting.

#### **5.2 Friskis&Svettis Uniform**

All Leaders are quite distinctive in their uniform that is worn at all classes and public events. Watch out for our smart new red and white uniform this summer! However although the red/blue uniform is being phased out we will continue to wear it in Aberdeen for the foreseeable future. Make sure that you know your 'Host' who will be wearing a distinctive blue t-shirt with 'Host' written on the back!

#### **5.3 Socks/T-shirts for Members**

F&S socks continue to be available to our members although they are also being phased out. At present we have reached saturation point with t-shirts but may launch a new design later.

#### **5.4 Updates**

We continue to produce regular updates for members to keep them informed of future events and what our members and Leaders have been up to.

#### **5.5 Promotional Incentives**

We started quite a successful membership campaign in October that remains ongoing. Each person who introduces a new member received a pair of F&S socks. This campaign attracted about 80 new members by the end of December.

The Bon Accord Centre, approached us in January 2008, who were organising a campaign to promote health and well-being in conjunction with Scottish Slimmers/Evening Express. Since this was good free publicity, we rapidly produced 1500 leaflets that were distributed to people visiting the stand at the Centre. Each leaflet is valid for a free class.

#### **5.6 Website**

Our website provides an easily accessible source of information regarding the F&S organisation in Aberdeen. Changes to class schedules, updates and up and coming events including the monthly Viking Hiking walk, are just some of the content regularly updated on the site. Many thanks to everyone who takes the time to provide Karen with this information as without it the website would be far less interesting. Over the year over 6000 different people have visited our website. There is also an e-mail address for answering any queries. In 2007 we received 32 e-mails this way.

### **6. Get Togethers for 2007**

In April we were invited to do the warm ups for the Balmoral Run. This was the third time we were invited to do this and is another public arena for the F&S logo outside our classes. In June we again did the warm up for the Race for Life down at the beach in Aberdeen. Here our Leaders faced over 8000 people over the two races before taking part in the race along with many of our members. However the weather was atrocious with torrential rain but it did not dampen the spirits of those who attended for this very worthwhile cause.

Our Senior members are also particularly active when it comes to the social scene organising a Doric Evening, Bowling Nights and Strawberry Teas, which besides being fun also raise money for charity. In February 2007 a Burns Supper was held at Cricket Club, Mannofield. Gunilla was in the chair and we were fortunate in getting excellent top-table speakers. This event is gaining in popularity and 74 attended. The Quines Social Fund helped with expenses. March saw the annual Doric Night – always a sellout. Jean and her Quines entertained everyone with help from Donald's songs and stories, Colin's songs and Marlene's Bothy Ballads. The highlight was a surprise item when a 'quine fae Inverurie did the strip'. Guess who that was! You're right – Gunilla! Guaranteed sellout for her next performance. Then two outings in June, first a bus trip to House of Den, a beautiful day and a popular event. Next was the VH walk at Inverurie. About 25 attended followed by a meal at the Golf Course. In November there was a theatre visit followed by a meal at Littlejohns', with 30 seats reserved. The year culminated in a Christmas lunch at the Cricket Club which is always well attended; this year 95 present! As at December 2007 the balance in the Social Fund is £983.62 and this fund will be used to publicise future events such as bus outings, meals, Burns Supper etc that are all getting quite expensive.

### **7. Classes**

We currently offer 44 classes across Aberdeenshire. These comprise Medium, Basic, Senior, Open Doors, Poolmobility, Back, Circuits and Lunchtime classes. Open Doors has gone from strength to strength with over 30 members attending classes. The Viking Hiking groups have also increased in numbers and activities.

### **8. Sponsorship by Stena Drilling**

A big thank you to Stena Drilling who have continued to support the Association this year by sponsoring T-shirts and Viking Hiking sticks. All proceeds from their generosity and monies generated by sales of old stock go towards the development and expansion of our Association.

### **9. Goals for 2008**

**So what goals do we want to set ourselves for 2008 - including the unfinished business from 2007?**

- To increase membership to over 1000.
- To send attendees to New Leaders Course – Stage 1 is in Stockholm October 2008.
- To have a Senior, Core course and a Follower Up Course in English as soon as is reasonably possible – Autumn 2008
- For as many Leaders as possible to visit Sweden and attend Svettisdagarna – November 2008
- To get people to recognise who Friskis&Svettis are and generate more local publicity.
- To encourage more members to become Hosts at our classes.
- To target younger people to become members.
- To get national recognition of the F&S diploma.

In conclusion I hope you can see that 2007 has been another busy and successful year for F&S Aberdeen. However most important is that we all have had fun and friendship through being part of F&S, whether as class participants, Leaders or even committee members! We hope that you all enjoy being part of such an inspirational organisation and join with us in trying to encourage as many people as possible to come along , take part and get fit too. You know the benefits – so spread the word – and if you feel inspired to train as a leader or get involved behind the scenes please let us know.

### **Friskis&Svettis Committee 2007**

Beverlie Welo - Chairman .....

Christine Richardson - Vice Chairman .....

James Wilson - Treasurer .....

Gordon Whyte - Secretary .....

Jenny Chapman .....