

VALLEY STRIDERS A.C. - HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

CLUB RESPONSIBILITY

As far as possible, the Club will aim to protect the health and safety of all members engaged in Club training and participating in Club competition.

The scope of the Health and Safety guidelines extends to training sessions and organised Club events.

To achieve its aim, the Club will:

- Endeavour to provide helpful guidance to members verbally and make the Health and Safety Guidelines available on the Club website.
- Publish and review specific risk assessment documents where appropriate, such as for individual events (eg. The Meanwood Valley Trail Race) or to ensure adherence with government health guidelines (eg. Covid-19 Guidelines).
- Ensure that additional risks associated with leading groups such as darkness and adverse weather conditions are considered, mitigated, and shared with members.
- Ensure that Club coaches and run leaders are suitably experienced to lead Club training sessions and groups.
- Provide suitable facilities and equipment for Club training sessions and Club events including First Aid and Welfare facilities.
- Ensure that any organised sporting event is subject to a suitable and sufficient risk assessment.

MEMBER RESPONSIBILITY

Members will:

- Familiarise themselves and abide by the Health and Safety Guidance located on the Club website when they join and on annual renewal of membership. This Guidance includes advice on weather, terrain, personal limitations and protecting fellow Club members.
- Do their best to prevent harm to themselves, running partners or members of the public.
- Acknowledge that they owe a duty of care to not wilfully injure themselves or others by negligent acts or omissions.

The Club relies on its members to report any problems encountered whilst running on training routes. For example, dangerous stiles, damaged pavements, potholes, poor visibility etc.

POLICY AND GUIDELINES REVIEW

The Health and Safety Policy and Guidelines will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that they remain accurate and reflect the Club ethos.

THE GUIDELINES

All members agree to abide by the Clubs Health & Safety Guidelines as follows:

SAFETY GENERALLY

All Club members must ensure that the Club has been provided with emergency contact details and should notify the membership secretary if there are any changes to these details.

All Club members must take personal responsibility for their own safety, whilst keeping a watchful eye on others running in the same group, particularly new members.

Consideration should be given to others, and common sense used.

In adverse weather conditions, members must take extra care and be vigilant to additional risks such as slippery or uneven surfaces.

Members should exercise common sense for personal safety issues including hydration and the treatment of strains and injuries due to participation in the sport.

If additional advice is required, members should seek advice from experts and professional practitioners outside the running Club as appropriate.

No headsets or music players to be used during any training session or running event in which Club members may participate as this can obstruct and hinder any instructions given.

MEDICAL CONDITIONS

All members of the Club declare themselves medically fit to run at their own risk and shall not hold the Club responsible for any incident occurring through a personal medical condition or injury.

As appropriate, members should request regular check-ups with their General Practitioner. Members with any medical conditions agree where appropriate to carry with them the relevant details of the condition and their name, address, and emergency phone number contact details.

Voluntary disclosure of medical conditions shall be the responsibility of the individual member or their carer in circumstances where they consider an individual risk assessment approach to their welfare may be appropriate.

APPROPRIATE CLOTHING

Members should understand the value of wearing appropriate clothing for the time of the year and appropriate shoes for any variations in terrain.

When running in the dark members should take responsibility for making themselves highly visible by wearing bright clothing, preferably with fluorescent or reflective strips, and be aware that drivers may find it difficult to see you. **Hi-viz clothing is compulsory at Valley Striders evening training sessions and social runs during the winter months.**

It is advisable during the autumn and winter months that members consider wearing head torches, chest torches or use actual torches to improve their own visibility when running and to also make themselves more visible to any drivers, cyclists, and members of the public.

Appropriate footwear should be worn at all times and consideration should be given to the surface being trained on (e.g. shoes with extra traction for running on the grass or trails). It is the responsibility of members to check the website or social media to ensure that the correct footwear is worn for the planned training. If in doubt, please contact the run leader.

Failure to wear appropriate clothing may result in you being unable to participate in a Club run due to risk.

STAYING TOGETHER

The group endeavour to stay together as much as possible. Members should take care to listen to the proposed route before setting off. The group leader should ensure that a head count is taken and if possible, a tail runner has been assigned to ensure that no one individual gets left behind. However, runners should be aware that this is not always possible.

Whenever mixed ability occurs within a group, regrouping should take place at appropriate times along the route to ensure that no one individual gets left behind.

If anyone decides to leave the group whilst out on the run, they must inform at least one other runner in that group who then must ensure that the run leader is made aware.

Upon returning to the start after completion of the session the group leader should check that everyone who started out has returned or can be accounted for.

Run leader should carry a mobile phone to be able to call for help if required.

ROAD SENSE

Routes shall be planned to avoid unlit roads at night during hours of darkness. The exception being off-road, head torch runs, where all members must have a head torch of sufficient brightness and the run leader must have a suitable level of experience for leading this type of run.

On roads without footpaths runners shall run to the right to face any oncoming traffic or to the left at bends where forward visibility to the right is limited.

The run leader will ensure the safety of the group when crossing any main roads and ensure members are across safely before carrying on the session.

FIRST AID

Members should familiarise themselves with any individuals who have a recognised emergency first aid qualification within the Club.

All run leaders should either have the means to send the member back to the Club or the nearest A&E for the necessary treatment, or carry the following suggested pack of first aid items:

- List of committee member phone numbers
- Foil blanket
- Sterile bandages and plasters
- Hand sanitiser
- Disposable sterile gloves
- Freeze spray

The run leaders will have a basic understanding of how to give treatment or first aid response to any minor injuries or basic response in the event of more serious injuries until the arrival of emergency services.

It is advisable for at least two members to stay with the injured person, until help arrives. Common sense should be exercised when returning the injured person back to the Club or home.

If appropriate, emergency services should be contacted using 112 from a mobile phone as it will record your location; alternatively use 999. Finally, a member of the committee should be informed as soon as is practically possible by contacting them directly. Ideally, this should be the committee member who is responsible for the Welfare and safety of Club members.

RUN LEADERS

Run leaders should:

- Take a mobile phone with them.
- Have access to emergency contact details via the Dropbox link, which should be saved to their phone.
- Only advertise the run to Club members and prospective members, as this will ensure access to emergency contact details. If members of another club are permitted to attend, they must carry emergency contact details with them on the run.

EVENTS

All events shall be staged in accordance with the rules and guidelines stipulated by the event insurers.

Events hosted by Valley Striders, such as the Meanwood Valley Trail Race, shall have an event specific risk assessment with health and safety guidance.

Events such as the club handicap race are considered as training runs and should therefore follow the health and safety guidance set out in this document.

INCIDENT RECORDS

Any incidents should be reported to the committee member responsible for Welfare for future reference, and for making known to all Club members when appropriate.

Actual incidents involving any member, or third party shall be formally recorded with a committee member.

ENDORSEMENT

These guidelines are endorsed and annually reviewed by all members of the Valley Striders A.C. Committee.

DATE OF NEXT REVIEW

Next AGM, November 2023