



# POLICY AND PROCEDURES

## Contents

<b>INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>COACHING AND LEADERSHIP.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>THE LEADER.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>STRUCTURED GROUPS.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>NEWCOMERS.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>MEMBERS RESPONSIBILITIES.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>GENERAL HEALTH &amp; SAFETY RULES.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>SAFETY GUIDANCE.....</b>	<b>8</b>
ROAD RUNNING.....	8
OFF-ROAD RUNNING.....	9
TRACK RUNNING.....	10
CYCLING.....	11
COACHED POOL SESSIONS.....	12
OPEN WATER SWIMMING SESSIONS.....	13
<b>EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN.....</b>	<b>14</b>
MINOR INJURY.....	14
THREATS TO LIFE OR MAJOR INJURY.....	14
INCIDENT/ACCIDENT REPORT FORMS.....	16
FOLLOW UP.....	16
<b>RISK ASSESSMENTS.....</b>	<b>17</b>
GENERAL RISK ASSESSMENTS.....	17
DYNAMIC RISK ASSESSMENTS.....	18
<b>APPENDIX I.....</b>	<b>19</b>
PROTOCOLS FOR GROUP.....	19
<b>APPENDIX II.....</b>	<b>21</b>
PROTOCOLS FOR GROUP MEMBERS.....	21



## **INTRODUCTION**

The Policy and Procedures detailed here are aimed at providing a practical common- sense approach to Health & Safety (H&S).

Wootton Road Runners (the Club) activities are defined as those which are advertised on the Club website, email, arranged at Club meetings, funded by the Club, or which use Club equipment. If an official activity is to be carried out without suitably qualified Coaches or Leadership, or it is to be undertaken where there are expected risks that could create H&S issues then the individuals concerned shall be warned of this fact, told of the heightened risk, the risk shall be identified, and they shall be informed that their participation is at their own risk.

The nature of many of the Club's activities means that situations change from session to session and may change as a session progresses. Because of this there is always a need for dynamic risk assessment to be employed to maintain H&S to acceptable levels.

## **COACHING AND LEADERSHIP**

All Club activities for the purposes of fitness training in running and cycling are led by suitably qualified people (Leaders).

These are either qualified UK Athletic coaches, coaches from related disciplines (such as British Triathlon Federation) or UK Athletic Leaders in Running and Fitness.

Although Leaders have been trained to a variety of levels all of them operate in accordance with the national governing body rules and guidelines.

If there is no such qualified person available at any running or cycling session participants will be informed of this fact immediately before any club activities and usually informed that if they continue with the session, they will be participating at their own risk.

Swimming sessions can be held either under the instruction of a suitably qualified Swimming Coach or without a coach. This will be dependent on the venue and type of session, but this will be advertised on the Club website/email bulletins. All swimming sessions will have an approved Lifeguard on site provided by the venue where the session is being held.

## THE LEADER

The Club operates guidelines on the role and responsibilities of its Leaders. These guidelines are shown in Appendix I

Leaders usually communicate through Facebook about the planned sessions and any matters arising.

Meetings are arranged with the Leaders in order to discuss how the sessions are working and where improvements can be made.

## STRUCTURED GROUPS

At the weekly Club Running evening, on a Thursday, the club operates a number of grouped sessions, depending on ability, where athletes participate in endurance running activity on the pathways, roads and countryside around the club.

These grouped sessions usually last for around an hour including the warmup and cool down and the running activity varies in pace from 12 minutes per mile to 6 minutes per mile, depending on the group, with some short recovery periods in between each effort.

The Leader for each group is identified and named by the Chairperson or their representative, at the start of Club Night. Each Leader will then announce the proposed route and make-up of the planned training session to their own group.

When light allows there is also a Grass Track Session at a local running track for any athlete interested in participating, no matter what ability. The Coach/Leader of the track session will also announce the planned training session.

**Member-led' running sessions:** Advertised through the club Facebook page. Runners run these at their own risk.

**Cycling sessions** are usually held on a Saturday morning, dependent on weather conditions. There will be a range of groups dependent on the number of riders and availability of leaders.

The Leader for each group will advise the route for the session and the planned details of the session.

**Pool based coached swim sessions** are usually held on a Friday evening. Sessions will be outlined by the coach for the specific session. Where sessions in a pool are not coached a session plan will be provided for each lane for participants to complete on their own. Each lane is allocated its own ability.

## **NEWCOMERS**

All newcomers, be they potential new members or guests, should introduce themselves to a representative of the Club before the start of the Club session, be it running, cycling or swimming.

A member of the Coaching team 'or run leader' will then talk to the newcomer. Potential new members are defined as someone who is not already a member of an affiliated UK Athletics club. Guests are already members of another affiliated UK Athletics club.

While this chat is made in a friendly and informal format, the aim is to assess the newcomers' capabilities and experience in order to direct them to a suitable group and also to understand what the newcomer is trying to achieve in terms of personal goals, be that if they plan to run a marathon, a shorter or longer distance or to compete in a triathlon either on the roads or in the countryside or if they are just trying to get fit or lose weight. It is usual that the person assessing the newcomer will be conservative in their assessment of capability in order to ensure the newcomer's first experience at a club session is relatively easy. In this way there is a safety advantage in that it overcomes any misunderstanding of the newcomers' ability.

Newcomers will be introduced to the group by the group leader who will welcome them and answer any queries. Newcomers should be capable of running at least 5 miles.

Newcomers to cycling sessions must make themselves known to the Leader for the session, who will explain the session. Anyone who wishes to cycle with the club sessions must make themselves aware of the clubs 'Group Riding Rules and Etiquette' document. They should be capable of cycling for the distance of the route at an appropriate pace and be able to perform

basic maintenance on their bike and carry any equipment and spares necessary for this maintenance.

Newcomers to coached swimming sessions will be assessed by the Coach and placed in a suitable lane for their ability.

Newcomers are welcome to join the club for a maximum of three consecutive weekly sessions before they are required to become a member. All newcomers are required to complete a 'new member induction' form (found on the WRR website).

Guests who are already members of another UK Athletics club will need to join the Club as their "second claim" or resign from their current club.

## **MEMBERS RESPONSIBILITIES**

It is the responsibility of every Club member to take reasonable care of their own H&S and to look out for others including both club members and the general public.

This responsibility includes the need to bring to the attention of the Leader taking the session any illness, injury or other matter that may affect the Health or Safety of the Club member and of others around them both at the start of and during the session.

Members are also responsible to report to any accident, incident or any "near miss" (something that may have the potential to cause harm to yourself or another individual) in order for the Club to be able to assess and address any issues that these occurrences might raise. This procedure is outlined in the "Reporting" section below.

It is the individual Club members responsibility to:

1. To develop a personal concern for the safety of themselves and others, particularly newcomers to the Club.
2. Avoid obvious hazardous situations.
3. Warn newcomers of known hazards.
4. Wear clothing appropriate for the conditions including high visibility bibs or garments.

5. Refrain from horseplay.
6. At all times be courteous to other athletes, Leaders and members of the public.
7. Report all accidents, incidents and “near misses” (whether injury has been sustained or not) to a committee member or a Leader.

## **GENERAL HEALTH & SAFETY RULES**

### **Dogs**

Club members, newcomers and guests are not allowed to bring dogs on any Club sessions be they on the track, road or urban routes.

### **Personal Stereos**

The use of personal stereos introduces an unacceptable risk to the wearer and other Club members and is therefore banned from all Club sessions.

### **Alcohol and Drugs**

No member shall participate in a Club session while under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs.

If members are using non-prescribed medicine, then they should consider whether it is appropriate for them to be participating in Club activities. They should always make the Leader aware of any illness they are currently using the medicine against and obey the Leader’s instructions if that Leader makes any special recommendations in relation to that illness and the Club session.

### **Smoking**

The Club actively discourages smoking. Smokers are requested not to smoke when in the vicinity of anyone else while attending any club activities.

In addition to this, smokers should adhere to the smoking policies at any venues being used by the Club, no matter what the purpose of that use.

As a fitness club we would also ask that when any guests of club activities who are smoking sees a member of the club approaching, they should make every effort to ensure



that the person approaching is happy for them to continue smoking otherwise either extinguish the tobacco product or move away.

### **Littering**

The Club actively discourages littering. Please take your litter home with you!

## **SAFETY GUIDANCE**

The following Safety Codes outline the organisation and conduct during training sessions. These are meant as guidelines for both the Leader and any participants.

### **ROAD RUNNING**

- The Leader will be responsible for assessing the safety of individuals and their attire and of the route to be taken.
- **Cancellation:** Chair of Run Committee will consult with run coaches and make a final decision as to whether a session can proceed.
- Avoid obvious hazardous situations.
- Warn newcomers of known hazards.
- Participants should wear suitably retro-reflective and reflective clothing when the club dictates it is required.
- Participants shall be aware of and follow Road Safety Rules contained in the Highway Code.
- Participants shall act courteously to all other road and pathway users.
- The Leader should have immediate access to a mobile telephone during Club activities.

#### **Before taking part in a road running training session participants must:**

- Provide the session Leader with information about any medical issues.
- Any guest or new member should complete a "New Member Induction Form" (available on the Club website) and present this to a Run Leader on arrival at and before commencing the session.
- Be aware of the Club's Safety Code and rules for road running.

#### **The Leader will:**

- Make things fun.
- Install good sportsmanship, a competitive spirit and teamwork within the group.
- Motivate the group and communicate effectively.

- Ensure the session is appropriate to the group.

## **OFF-ROAD RUNNING**

- The Leader will be responsible for assessing the safety of individuals and their attire and of the route to be taken.
- **Cancellation:** Chair of Run Committee will consult with run coaches and make a final decision as to whether a session can proceed.
- Avoid obvious hazardous situations.
- Warn newcomers of known hazards.
- Organised Off Road Running in the dark will require head torches. With routes to be risk assessed ahead of group participation.
- Participants shall be aware of and follow the Countryside Code.
- Participants shall act courteously to all other users of the countryside.
- The Leader should have immediate access to a mobile telephone during club activities.

### **Before taking part in an off-road running session participants must:**

- Provide the session Leader with information about any medical issues.
- Any guest or new member should complete a “New Member Induction Form” (available on the Club website) and present this to the Leader on arrival at and before commencing the session.
- Be aware of the Club’s Safety Code and rules for off-road running.

### **The Leader will:**

- Make things fun.
- Install good sportsmanship, a competitive spirit and teamwork within the group.
- Motivate the group and communicate effectively.
- Ensure the session is appropriate to the group.

## **TRACK RUNNING**

- Club coaches will provide skills drills during the warmup. Enabling all levels to participate together.
- Attendance from members of all group levels is actively encouraged.
- The Leader will be responsible for assessing the safety of individuals and their attire.
- **Cancellation:** Chair of Run Committee will consult with run coaches and make a final decision as to whether a session can proceed.
- Participants shall act courteously to all other users.
- The Leader should have immediate access to a mobile telephone during club activities.

### **Before taking part in a track session participants must:**

- Provide the session Leader with information about any medical issues.
- Any guest or new member should complete a "New Member Induction Form" (available on the Club website) and present this to the Leader on arrival at and before commencing training at the Session.
- Be aware of the Club's Safety Code and rules for track running.

### **The Leader will:**

- Make things fun.
- Install good sportsmanship, a competitive spirit and teamwork within the group.
- Motivate the group and communicate effectively.
- Ensure the session is appropriate to the group.

## **CYCLING**

- The Leader will be responsible for assessing the safety of individuals and their attire and of the route to be taken.
- The Head Coach has the final decision on whether a session can proceed.

- Bicycles are not provided so the rider will need to bring their own, it is recommended that this is a road racing bike and, regardless of type, it should be in roadworthy condition.
- Avoid obvious hazardous situations.
- Where an approved ANSI helmet – no helmet no ride.
- Warn group participants of known hazards.
- There will be no cycling Club sessions in the dark.
- Participants shall be aware of and follow the Highway Code.
- Participants shall act courteously to all other users of the road.
- Participants shall be aware of and follow the Club's 'Group Riding Rules and Etiquette'.
- The Leader should have immediate access to a mobile telephone during club activities.
- Leaders will not be responsible for riders turning up on bikes with off-road style tyres and the group will not re-group to them if they cannot keep up.

**Before taking part in a cycle session participants must:**

- Provide the session Leader with information about any medical issues.
- Any guest or new member should complete a "New Member Induction Form".
- (Available on the Club website) and present this to the Leader on arrival at and before commencing training at the Session.
- Be aware of the Club's Safety Code and rules for cycling sessions.

**The Leader will:**

- Make things fun.
- Install good sportsmanship, a competitive spirit and teamwork within the group.
- Motivate the group and communicate effectively.
- Ensure the session is appropriate to the group.

## **COACHED POOL SESSIONS**

- The Coach will be responsible for assessing the safety of individuals and their attire and of the pool being used.
- The Coach has the final decision on whether a session can proceed.
- Avoid obvious hazardous situations.
- Warn group participants of known hazards.
- Participants shall act courteously to all other users of the pool.
- The Coach should have immediate access to a mobile telephone during club activities.
- There must be a lifeguard on duty at all times during the session.

### **Before taking part in a coached swim session participants must:**

- Must be able to swim a recognised stroke for a minimum of 33 metres unaided and without the need to stop.
- Provide the Coach with information about any medical issues.
- Any guest or new member should complete a “New Member Induction Form” (available on the Club website) and present this to a Club representative on arrival at and before commencing training at the Session.

Be aware of the Club’s Safety Code and rules for swimming sessions.

### **The coach will:**

- Make things fun.
- Install good sportsmanship, a competitive spirit and teamwork within the group.
- Motivate the group and communicate effectively.
- Ensure the session is appropriate to the group.

## **OPEN WATER SWIMMING SESSIONS**

- The swimmer will be responsible for assessing their own safety, their own attire and of the venue being used.
- The venue has the final decision on whether a session can proceed.
- Avoid obvious hazardous situations.
- Participants shall act courteously to all other users of the venue.
- Follow and adhere to venue code of conduct and rules.

### **Before taking part in an open water swimming session participants must:**

- Be able to swim a recognised stroke for an extended amount of time and be able to tread water unaided for a sufficient amount of time in order to be able to recover their breath before continuing swimming.
- Ensure the venue is aware they are using the facilities.
- Be aware of the Club's Safety Code and rules for swimming sessions.

## **EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN**

This section deals with accidents/incidents resulting in minor injuries and threats to life though major injuries.

### **MINOR INJURY**

These include but are not limited to cuts, grazes and sprains.

The Leader should immediately stop the session and assess the situation. If, first aid is required and there is someone immediately available who has First Aid or medical training suitable to be able to assist the casualty and, if available, pass the care of the casualty to them.

The Leader or Assistant should take all participants who were not involved in the incident/accident and/or providing first aid, away to a safe location and when appropriate continue the session.

If care has not been passed to someone else and another suitably qualified Leader is not available, then the Leader should stay with the casualty whilst a First Aider is called. Another participant of the group is to be asked to guide all participants not involved in the incident/accident away to a safe location to await further instructions. This could include abandoning the session or continuing with it but this decision should not be made until the casualty has been dealt with.

The person administering care of the patient may require assistance so two people should remain behind to assist the person administering care where required.

### **THREATS TO LIFE OR MAJOR INJURY**

These include but are not limited to bone breaks, heart attack, loss of cardiac function, head injuries and respiratory problems.

The Leader should immediately stop the session and assess the situation. If there is anyone immediately available who has First Aid or medical training suitable to be able to assist the casualty and, if available, pass care of the casualty to them.

In the event there is not a suitably trained individual available to assist the casualty; the Leader should take responsibility to immediately contact emergency services and to assign another participant of the group to guide all participants not involved in the incident/accident away from the casualty to a safe area to await further instructions.

If a suitably trained individual is available to assist the casualty the Leader should pass responsibility for the care of the casualty to them, then make arrangements for the emergency services to be contacted and then move all other participants away from the casualty to a safe area.

It is recommended at this stage that the rest of the session is abandoned, and all remaining participants walk back to the start.

The person administering care of the patient may require assistance so two people should remain behind to assist the person administering care where required

## **INCIDENT/ACCIDENT REPORT FORMS**

Group leaders are responsible for reporting any accident or incident via the England Athletics incident reporting portal.

<https://www.mysporthost.com/HealthAndSafety/>

Please also notify [secretary@woottonroadrunners.co.uk](mailto:secretary@woottonroadrunners.co.uk) and [chair@woottonroadrunners.co.uk](mailto:chair@woottonroadrunners.co.uk)

UKA provide a Health and Safety Helpline, supported by the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents. If you need support reporting you can call 0121 248 2235 or email [athleticsafety@RoSPA.com](mailto:athleticsafety@RoSPA.com).

## **FOLLOW UP**

Follow up on athlete's condition after the event.

Review H&S for this route/session to ensure no repetition



## **RISK ASSESSMENTS**

All Club training sessions and activities are required to have some form of risk assessment carried out to ensure that they are undertaken as safely as possible.

Generic Risk Assessments have been prepared to reduce the administrative load on Officials and Leaders by preventing unnecessary repetition of the general risks in the Club's normal activities.

### **GENERAL RISK ASSESSMENTS**

These have been prepared for running locations frequently used by the Club and are on the club website

Due to the distance and varying routes utilised by the Club on cycle sessions, a general risk assessment in line with the Highway Code has been completed.

The club holds a regular Time Trial session for cycling. A specific risk assessment has been completed for this Time Trial route.

### **DYNAMIC RISK ASSESSMENTS**

Changes in weather conditions, temperature, suitability of the route due to such things as road works, fallen branches etc, and athletic performance of the participants throughout the activity require the use of Dynamic Risk Assessment which is a continuous process of identifying risk, assessing its implications and coming up with a way to eliminate the risk or reduce it to an acceptable level.

## Appendix I

### **Protocols for Group Leaders**

#### **Leaders Know your route.**

You should have a clear idea of where you are going, how far it is, and how long it will take to complete the route and any special considerations about the route (e.g., street lighting, steps road works etc.)

#### **Know your pace.**

Keep to the advertised pace wherever and whenever possible. It is particularly important that you should not go faster than you promise as this can cause problems for people who have put their trust in you or the person who has been allocated as the pacer.

#### **Count your participants (repeatedly).**

If anyone gets lost, you must make every effort (with help from Group members as appropriate) to find them.

#### Running groups

- If it appears that more than 12 people intend to run with you, you may at your discretion limit the size of the Group before leaving the Club. (Depending upon the number of qualified leaders in the group)
- Try to ensure that people have a choice by making this clear as the groups are forming up. You may in particular try to persuade faster runners to join a faster group.

#### Cycling groups

- If it appears that more than 7 people intend to cycle with you, you may at your discretion limit the size of the Group before leaving the Club.
- Try to ensure that people have a choice by making this clear as the groups are forming up. You may in particular try to persuade faster cyclist to join a faster group.

**Advise participants** of route, pace, distance, terrain (including icy, muddy or wet conditions), how hilly along with any other pertinent information.

**Appoint a Tail End Charlie** if the Group is large (more than 6 participants)

Check regularly during the session that this person is in sight / in contact.

Check that you know what you need to do **in case of emergency. Leaders should always carry a mobile phone or have access to a mobile phone.**

**Know your participants.**

Try to find out names, experience, likes and dislikes of those who participate in your session – it should make for a better session and a more “involving” experience, especially for new members.

Make every effort to greet any newcomers before the session and check they are in the right group for their pace.

If you know that someone electing to participate in the Group is not suited to the pace, you may at your own discretion ask them to participate with a different Group. Be aware that on occasion “faster” members may want to do what is for them a slow session – in which case you may wish to remind them of their obligation to respect the status of the Group (see below).

Be aware that many participants like to go as fast as possible over the last part of the session. They need to know that they go ahead at their own risk (see below).

You need to ensure that the slowest member of the Group gets back safely.

## Appendix II

### **Protocols for Group Members**

#### **General**

#### **Comments**

Wootton Road Runners/Wootton Tri takes reasonable precautions to provide a range of groups at different paces with competent and qualified Leaders. However, it is first and foremost your own responsibility to ensure that you are fit to participate at the speed and over the distance and terrain as described; and to act responsibly with regard to your own safety and that of others. Be aware that the Leader is just that – and is NOT a “Coach” who can advise you on your training.

#### **Check that you are participating with a suitable Group.**

If you have any doubts or questions, ask the Leader, (before you set off) about pace, distance, terrain or anything that might affect your decision to participate with this Group.

Beginners or members new to the Club are advised, in the first instance, to choose a group well within their capabilities.

#### **Respect the Status of the Group**

Be prepared to participate at the pace as stated at the beginning of the session, and as judged by the Leader. If you are not reasonably confident that you can participate at this speed for this distance, choose a slower Group.

If you are someone who is faster than this, you should moderate your speed accordingly (always staying behind the Leader) or choose a faster group.

Accept the Leader’s route choice unless you know this to be dangerous (e.g., in extreme weather conditions) or ill-advised (e.g., a road closure), or unless the Leader is clearly “lost”.

## **Safety**

Accept the instructions of the Leader as to safety, including: -

- Conditions underfoot. (e.g., avoiding flooding, ice or debris)
- Road traffic.
- Taking due care at all intersections and crossing the road.
- Take due care when running where there is no pavement.
- Always give way to any traffic you may encounter and never assume it will give way to you.
- Always follow the Highway Code.

The Leader, and WRR, cannot take any responsibility for anyone who is, by choice, not participating as part of the group. This includes: -

- anyone ahead of the group and clearly not making any effort to re-group when requested by the Leader.
- anyone choosing to take a detour or a separate route.

If you need to stop or leave the group for any reason (including loo breaks) make sure that the Leader knows – and knows if you are happy to make your own way back to the group or the Club.

The Leader will wait, and will turn back, if necessary, for anyone unable to keep up with the group. If you become aware that someone in the group is struggling to keep up, alert the Leader at a suitable opportunity.

If anyone should get into serious difficulties, be prepared to help them within the limits of your own safety and ability and alert the Leader at the earliest opportunity.

If it becomes necessary to split the group for any reason, and you are no longer with the Leader, make sure that you know who is leading your (new) group – and regard them as your

Leader in line with these notes.

