ACKWORTH ROAD RUNNERS
Established 1985

Ackworth Road Runners

Health & Safety Guidance and Risk Assessment

v1.9 July 2026

Contents

Introduction....2
Dynamic Risk Assessment....3
Mitigating Risk....4
Road Running....4
Off-Road Running....4
Club Training Sessions....5
Guidelines for Running Groups....5
For Young Athletes (aged 15-17 years) and Vulnerable Adults....8
Accident Reporting....9
Emergency Contact (ICE) Details....9
Generic Risk Assessment for ARR Training Sessions....10

Introduction

To ensure that the Club minimises risk to its members and to the general public, it is necessary to ensure that all events and training takes place in a safe environment.

While the Ackworth Road Runners Club (ARR) has no specific legal responsibility in respect of the Health and Safety of club members, the club provides guidance to members so that they may make risk based decisions whenever they choose to take part in any club activity. Due to the nature of the activities that ARR engage in, it is difficult to mitigate every area of risk and therefore the Club Coaches and Group Leaders must undertake individual 'Duty of Care' for the athletes under their control.

All activities entered into by members are made purely on a voluntary basis and while the club will do everything within its control to assist in the management of risk. It is essential to acknowledge that no specific members should be held responsible for any acts or omissions leading to personal injury or damage to property.

Any member who has any doubt or concerns about their fitness, or ability to take part in any session or race should consult their GP, or a suitably qualified health professional before considering participation. Runners have a responsibility to do their best to prevent harm to themselves, their running partners or members of the public. It should be acknowledged by all club members that they as individuals owe a duty of care to not wilfully injure themselves or others by their negligent acts or omissions.

Dynamic Risk Assessment

Dynamic risk assessment is something we do many times each day, for example when making a judgment about when it is safe to cross a road. In making that dynamic risk assessment, we are evaluating the chance of injury and likely severity against the likely benefit.

Running, however safely organised, carries a certain amount of risk and those taking part in any running or associated activity (e.g. cross training) need to be aware of those risks in order to minimize and accept them. Equally, the long-term benefits of running, even when balanced against the risks, should not be underestimated with increased fitness, health, well-being and longevity just to mention a few.

Risk assessment does not only serve to protect the athlete, we also have a responsibility to ensure that non-participants, property and animals are not harmed by anyone carrying out activities whilst operating as a member of ARR. This responsibility only applies during ARR organised activities and does not apply to any activity outside of the Club's control.

Risk assessment during running needs to be a dynamic process. Due to the ever changing environment which makes running so exciting and enjoyable, much can be done in preparation before running to ensure that risks that are foreseeable are appropriately managed. For example, when running at night on or near roadways, wearing something white or reflective and looking left / right and left again before crossing a road.

All ARR training sessions are carried out on either roads, off-road or cross country, therefore the guidance below should be considered by the CiRF/LiRF or Group Leader carrying out the session.

Mitigating Risk

The following guidance is intended to help CiRF/LiRF, Group Leaders and members assess and control hazards that may be present and thereby reduce or remove any inherent risk.

There are some factors common to all ARR activity regardless of the type of area we are running in.

- Members are strongly advised not wear headphones or listen to personal players during sessions.
- Members should dress appropriately to ensure their safety during sessions making sure they can be seen at all times by members of the public and other members.
- Members should wear appropriate footwear.
- Members should follow the Highway Code and be aware of other road users, cyclists, pedestrians and animals.
- When running at night members should wear high visibility clothing and preferably running lights too. Every effort should be taken to run in well-lit areas.

Road Running

Where possible, members should avoid running routes that necessitate crossing roads. Where crossing is necessary, use a safe route using bridges or underpasses, or use crossings or traffic islands.

We cannot assume that drivers can see us. Members should wear something visible when running on or across traffic routes. At night, white clothes, clothes with reflective strips, a head torch or some other high visibility garment must be worn.

On roads with no path, members should run towards oncoming traffic so they can take evasive measures if necessary.

Off-Road Running

Members should be aware of uneven ground; potholes; slippery surfaces; debris; loose stones and ditches and streams and be aware of tree roots, animals, overhanging branches and farm vehicles.

Club Training Sessions

Guidelines for Running Groups

It is important for all members to note that whilst the Run Leader(s) are responsible for the safe operations of the group, individual runners are still responsible for their own safety and the safety of fellow runners.

The club has a number of qualified leaders who have been on the England Athletics Coaching in Running Fitness course (CiRF) or Leadership in Running Fitness course (LiRF). However, it is not always possible to ensure that groups will be led by these individuals. Volunteers do not need to take this course to start leading groups on club runs but should first attend the non qualified run leader session organised by the club Coaching Co-ordinator.

Training Session Ethos

- The sessions are group sessions and so there is an explicit responsibility to support each other and the Run Leader.
- Sessions are welcoming and friendly but are also training sessions, so all runners are expected to support the Run Leader delivering England Athletics good practice in respect of warm ups, drills, cool-downs and stretching etc.
- All runs need to be achievable for all runners within the group.
- The pace of the run should be dictated by the slowest runner in the group.
- Doubling back is mandatory and key to working as a team and supporting slower runners (we've all been there) and should not be seen as a chore.
- Faster runners in the group should not just wait at the top of the hill then instantly set off when the slowest members get there. This is grossly unfair on the slower runners who get no rest.
- Remember, we have all been the slowest in the group at some stage, please treat these runners with the same consideration that you would wish to be treated.

Run Leaders have the final say on runs. If you are asked by the run leader to slow down, double back or look after the group, then please do so.

The Basics

- All groups should aim to complete a dynamic warm-up where possible.
- Groups should be split into appropriate abilities so that the pace and distance guidelines from the associated page on the website for the training night can be met.
- Groups should be kept to sensible and manageable sizes and there should be at least one Run Leader for every 10-12 runners.
- All runners should arrive at least ten minutes before the advertised start times so that groups can be organised and can warm-up/leave at the advertised times.

Run Leaders will:

- Check on the morning of the session for extreme weather conditions. If the Met Office app OR the BBC Weather app forecasts that the "feels like" temperature in Ackworth (or any alternative venue specified) at 1800 is 30 degrees Celsius or higher, **training will be cancelled.** If the forecast is borderline, the ARR Training Co-ordinator's decision is final.
- Plan a route before the run within the appropriate pace and distance as detailed on the club's website training page and FB Members Area page.
- Carry a mobile phone for emergencies or when this is not possible ensure that someone within the group has one.
- Ensure that the pace of the group is determined by the needs of the slowest runner.
- Ensure that EVERYONE in the group doubles back to keep the group together.
- Note the number of runners at the start and finish of the run.
- Not leave anyone behind for any reason.
- Encourage group members to move up a group when appropriate.
- Ensure that someone escorts runners who are unable to continue due to injury or illness, back to the start.
- If the group is becoming unmanageable due to a wide range of abilities, split the group into two asking another experienced runner to lead one of the sub-groups.
- Stick to roads with pavements where possible when running through urban areas. If there is no alternative, then take every precaution to ensure the safety of runners by avoiding main/busy roads and using the advice from the

Highway Code as a bare minimum; single file, right hand side of the road into direction of traffic, high viz, look-outs etc.

- Stick to pavements with adequate lighting when time of day/night dictates.
- Report any accidents or near misses.

All runners should:

- Wear high-visibility clothing in the darker months (run leaders reserve the right to ask people to leave the run if they are not wearing appropriate high-visibility clothing.)
- Carry some form of Identification and emergency contact details.
- Not wear headphones.
- Inform the Run Leader of any illness or injury concerns.
- Inform the Run Leader if they are new or have recently moved up a group.
- Bring appropriate medication if required.
- Notify the Run Leader if you are leaving the run for whatever reason (or if that's not possible, another member of the group.)
- Stay within contact of all members unless a split has been agreed with the Run Leader.
- Faster runners should loop back at regular intervals or when requested to by the Run Leader.
- If you choose to run with a group that is slower than your usual pace, do not run at the front of this group, stay back and help the leader otherwise your pace will dictate the group and make it harder for others in the group.
- Look to place themselves in the appropriate group based on their ability. If they find themselves at the front of the group most weeks, consider moving up a group. Conversely, if they find themselves at the back most weeks, consider a slower paced group.
- Cross on official road crossings wherever possible, all roads and road junctions should be approached with caution and only cross when safe to do so. Do not follow other runners across the road; ensure that you carry out your own checks before you cross. Mid-sections of a group tend to ignore traffic signals while following the front of the pack which can be particularly dangerous. Please re-group in full on the other side of the road.
- Do not run more than two abreast especially in busy areas.
- Give way to other pedestrians/path users when necessary.

- Warn other runners around you of impending hazards, pedestrians, dustbins, low hanging branches etc.
- Look after the other runners within your training group, if someone is struggling make sure that they are not left on their own or inform your Run Leader.

If you have any comments, suggestions or feedback regarding how the club do or do not implement and stick to these guidelines, please email secretary@ackworthroadrunners.club .

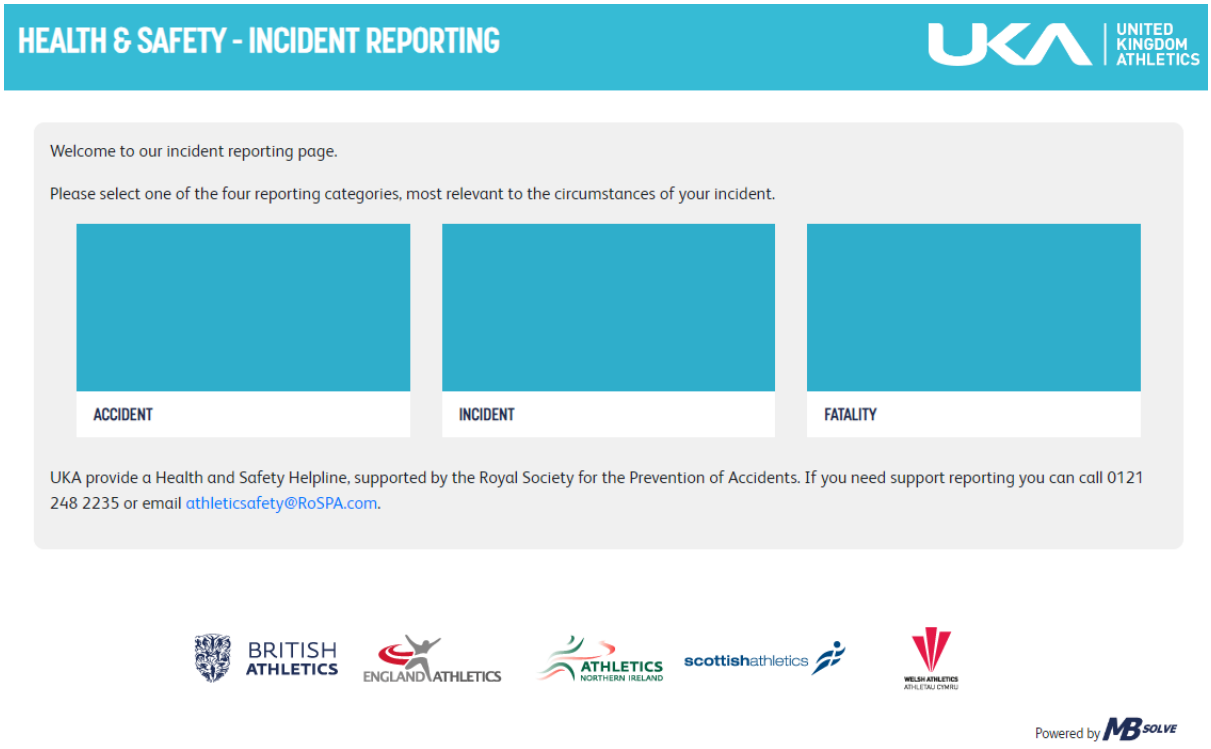
For Young Athletes (aged 15-17 years) and Vulnerable Adults

- When attending ARR training sessions, you must ALWAYS run with a nominated adult who runs at a similar pace to you.
- Notify a responsible adult if you have to go somewhere (why, where and when you will return)
- Do not respond if someone seeks private information unrelated to athletics such as personal information, home life information
- Strictly maintain boundaries between friendship and intimacy with a coach or technical official
- Never accept lifts in cars or invitations into homes on your own without the prior knowledge and consent of your parent/carer
- Use safe transport or travel arrangements
- Report any accidental injury, distress, misunderstanding or misinterpretation to your parents/carers and club Welfare officer as soon as possible.
- Report any suspected misconduct by coaches or other people involved in athletics to either of the club's welfare officers as soon as possible.

Accident Reporting

Any accidents or near misses that occur during club events or training sessions (Seniors and Juniors) should be reported on the online UKA Accident/Near Miss form either by the individual concerned or the session Group Leader.

https://health-and-safety.myathletics.uk/



When this has been completed the details are emailed back to the email address submitted on the form. This email should then be forwarded to secretary@ackworthroadrunners.club for record keeping purposes and follow up action if required.

Alternatively, all the details can be submitted to secretary@ackworthroadrunners.club for processing.

Emergency Contact (ICE) Details

It is essential that the club holds up to date records of members chosen emergency contact details to ensure that the right person is informed in the case of an emergency.

New members are asked to complete these details on the Application Form when they join. It is the responsibility of individual members to ensure that the club is in possession of their correct ICE details and to advise the club of any changes.

Generic Risk Assessment for ARR Training Sessions

Group Leader could be CiRF, LiRF or an experienced club member directed by one of our qualified coaches

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed?	Existing control measures	Any further actions required?	Risk Rating after application of control measures (High/Medium/Low)
Inclement weather – making it too hot/cold/wet or slippy to run.	Participants and group leaders	Group Leader to give appropriate advice to participants dependent on weather conditions, e.g. use of hat and sun cream in the heat, ensure participants are hydrated and carry water in hot conditions. Plan sessions accordingly. Check for extreme weather conditions on the morning of the session.	Cancellation of sessions to be considered if weather conditions make it unsafe to run. Cancel session if Met Office or BBC predicts "feels like" temperature of 30 degrees C or higher at 1800.	Low
Traffic/road crossings on route	Participants and group leaders Members of public	Group Leader to remind participants at the start of the session to use crossings provided and reinforce this weekly. Cross as a group where possible.	Group Leader to remind participants to take personal responsibility within the session.	Low
Ground conditions – uneven/changing ground conditions.	Participants and group leaders	Group Leader to ensure the route is safe as far as is reasonably practicable before taking the group out on the run.	Group Leader to advise participants of any changing/ uneven ground conditions at the start of the session if known.	Low
Injuries through participation/medical conditions	Participants and group leaders	Group Leader to ask participants at the start of each session whether anyone has any injuries they should know about. Group Leader to plan sessions to suit the abilities present in the group. 1st aid kit to be carried by Group Leader. Group Leader to carry a mobile phone in case of emergencies.	CiRF or LiRF (where available) to deliver an appropriate warm up and cool down activity.	Low

Participants getting lost	Participants	Group Leader to share route with the group before each run and explain the route at the start of the session. Group Leader to consider group management strategies such as loop backs and out and back routes to help keep group together when necessary.	Back markers nominated where required.	Low
Inappropriate running kit/equipment	Participants	Participants must ensure their running kit/shoes are in good condition.	Participants must wear high vis/bright clothing when running in the dark.	Low
Members of the public getting in the way of runners	Participants, group leaders and members of public	Group leader to plan appropriate routes for the group.	Group leaders to remind participants to be respectful to members of the public.	Low

Steve Berry
ARR Policy Officer
Reviewed and updated July 2026