Leading Running groups at Redway Runners

Some general guidance and tips – this is to help you and ensure we have some consistency across all our runs

Remember:

If you lead a club run 'it is not your run'

If you cannot make the run, please ensure you have arranged cover.

You need to look after everyone – the ones at the front usually look after themselves – but they can lead the group the wrong way!

Ensure the runners get the Redway Runners experience 'fun, friendly'

Be aware of the accident information (I can let you have a copy of the form)

On runs you must adapt to what is happening (or not happening), and probably adapt several times – always be alert right up till you leave. Amazing how many times runners take the wrong turn 100 yards from the finish point.

Children – we do not allow children to run with our groups without someone who takes parental consent. The advice if asked if children can come along with parents is this is allowed as long as it has been agreed with the run leader. Similar advice for running with dogs.

Before the run

Plan and advertise your full run schedule for all runs for the next two months on the club web site, allowing time for runners to make their own training plans.

Ensure you check the info on the club website is correct about your run (check every now and then)

Ensure you are aware of your first aid responsibilities and have appropriate cover.

If you are changing from the normal club run, (ie location, start time, etc) then you need to ensure that proper notice is given including a note in the club weekly mail as well as Facebook.

Ensure you understand the route you will be taking, ie any risks that need to be managed, see safety guidance document attached.

Should you need to change or cancel a run at short notice then post details on the Facebook page.

Do not forget pen/paper for list of runners or a method of recording the full names

Prepare announcements, see pinned post on the Run Leads Facebook page at:

https://www.facebook.com/groups/498343358201493

At start of run

Arrive early

Take a register of who attends, with full names and keep this secure and private for at least 21 days.

New runners should have already joined before attending, if not and you are happy for them to run with the group please take full contact details, including emergency contact info (we have a new runner form that can be used) and ask them to join on-line when get home and before joining any future runs

Talk to new runners welcome them and ensure they are ok – they will be nervous.

Talk to any helpers about expectations (see note about tail bike/runner section)

Brief any notices or info, include safety information

As part of the briefing, ask:

- If there are any new runners
- If there are any injuries or medical issues that you need to be aware of that may affect the run – if there are, discreetly get the details and adapt the run as required.

Provide overview of the run, i.e. if a session provide details on the number of reps or time finishing, etc

Warm up as appropriate for the session, e.g. Intervals, hills and speed work

Run with a mobile phone and have contacts in case of problems (Martin, 999)

If any runners should have any forms ask that they post them to the club, address on joining form

Make sure all the people helping with the run, are fully aware of their roles

During Run

Make sure front runners are going right way

Make sure back runners are not getting left behind. We must never leave anyone behind or alone

Make sure new runners are looked after and when possible, introduce to someone about their pace

Simples!!!

If you need help – other club runners will usually help – just ask a 'regular'

You are in charge – you are responsible

Suggested way to keep together

- Loop backs
- Set route

- Send on extra loops
- Split into groups
- Out & back
- Point to point

End Run

Cool down as appropriate for the session or remind runners to do their own cool downs

Answer any Q&A's – see below for any you cannot answer

Ask and seek feedback (even afterwards to contact you / Martin)

Resolve any issues as quickly as possible (saves it blowing up later)

Ensure you have everyone back from the run – do not leave before the tail runner is back

The run leader or a designated volunteer should be the last one to leave post-run. Most health-related problems such as heat stroke or heart attacks tend to occur in the down time immediately following a group run.

After the run

After the run input the total number of runners (including helpers and you) to the club google form at:

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1SyQ0qsKuvawgXpEmHcBXLz5y8ufzH3IXnSa8VnlLANI/edit?usp=sharing

A few notes:

- If you cannot access to input data then you may need to request access, we will only grant this to club run leads (those listed as run leads on Love Admin)
- Remember the number is the total number of runners, including helpers AND you
- If run is cancelled, then please grey that cell and add a comment
- If no one turns up for the run, then it is 1 if you go for the run on your own or 0 if you abort
- Do fill in your numbers or you will be hounded
- Please take care with input
- New runs and deleted runs will be managed by me and Nikki
- Please do not change descriptions of runs – they should be the same as the run schedule on the club website
- If you have a number of runs and they are merged, then only one run is counted for run numbers

If you want (optional) post a short note on Facebook (number of runners / route / points of interest). Please remember not to embarrass anybody or name anyone inappropriately. Monitor feedback on Facebook. You may want to do this to promote the run for more numbers future weeks

Advise Martin of any issues

Any New Runner forms please add info (name and e-mail address) to the club mailing system (mail chimp) but **ONLY** if they have ticked they want e-mail communications from the club at: http://redwayrunners.us7.list-manage.com/subscribe?u=e2bc3375f5f18f1cf3deb1edc&id=7fe52593fc

Pass Martin any paperwork, money collected ASAP

Think about the run and learn any lessons.

Post anything like issues or thoughts on the 'run lead' Facebook group page that could help other run leads.

In Case of Emergency

If you have an emergency situation during a club run/activity and need runner's medical information or we need to contact next of kin, then the first point of contact is me Martin Lawrence (07968 782821) otherwise can contact:

If you need to contact the emergency services, then if access is needed to a restricted area, like bollards would restrict an ambulance access, ensure you let them know when dialling 999 so they can arrange access.

If Martin is not available contact any welfare officer for the club:

- Rena 07764 193205 (Including Safeguarding issues)
- Elliot 07771 157487
- Ros 07947 478188
- Michelle 07756 227514
- Sarah 07752 345870

For Emergency contact information for the runner, you can contact:

- Martin Lawrence – 07968782821
- Nikki Norman - 07860 805123
- Debbie Dickinson - 07852 559266
- Glenn Dickinson - 07889 541828
- Lisa Cameron - 07528 009133
- David Argent - 07880 601121
- Annette Smyth - 07811 266072

Hopefully, you will not need to, but best always prepared, please put these numbers in your contacts.

Welfare or safeguarding issues must be reported as quickly as possible

Runner's questions:

Ways to resolve questions you cannot answer may be:

Ask them to use the contact us on https://www.redwayrunners.com/

They post on Redway Runners Facebook page and see if other runners have thoughts (but should treat info given as not gospel)

Remember we are run leads not coaches – let the 'professionals' do the coaching / sort injuries, etc.

Tail Role

As a Tail role (usually a runner or bike) is to ensure the group is always accounted for and where possible you Inform the Run Lead to any issues i.e. injured runners.

Some run leads may request for the tail role person to wear a hi vis or carry a flag and/or carry a club first aid kit

A Tail should always remain at the back of the group and check during loop backs all runners have completed the loop back and returned to the main group (particularly if there are additional hazards such as roads). The tail role should not be the 'slowest' runner in the group

The Run Lead will make you known before the start of the run and you need to continue during the run.

When there is a loop back you need make yourself known, if not on a bike or wearing a high vis then raise an arm in the air and when the runners come towards you state, 'loop back' and inform runners if you wish them to loop in front or behind you.

You always need to encourage and support all runners and keep the runners motivated.

Like all runners during a club run you are representing Redway Runners and should acknowledge/thank members of the public - so long as it's appropriate.

You need to keep yourself safe too and in addition to watching the group you need to look after yourself, so if you are on a tail bike make sure your bike is well maintained and wear a helmet. Again, any problems should be reported to the Run Lead as soon as possible.

Lastly, enjoy! It is an amazing opportunity to help and encourage the group especially those who are building their confidence and may have moved up from another group.

Lastly, renewed thanks. Your help is very much appreciated.

First Aid Courses

The club holds regular first aid courses and we recommend all run leads attend these, the club pays the cost of the course, for details contact Martin.

Finally

Any problems contact Martin – call me on 07968 782821 or rr@redwayrunners.com

I would rather hear it from you not 3rd hand

Sometimes may need to remind runners we all do it voluntary as we love running and want others to enjoy it as well

Remember you cannot please all the runners all the time but let's aim for a high % pleased

Redway Runners – We run Milton Keynes!

These are a copy of the Association of running Clubs Group Leaders Guidance for coaches and leaders of running groups – which expect to be followed.

SAFETY GUIDANCE FOR ENDURANCE TRAINING GROUP LEADERS

RISK ASSESSMENT

The process of 'risk assessment' is widely used to ensure health and safety in a variety of situations. Here it simply describes the thought processes that a coach or group leader should go through before embarking on a run. Factors to be taken into account should include:

THE TRAINING GROUP

- **Age** - younger athletes will need a greater degree of control than more mature runners.
- **Ability** - capabilities, current fitness, athletes 'carrying' injuries
  (a varied ability group will be more difficult to lead than one with runners of similar ability).
- **Experience** - runners' experience of the type of terrain, knowledge of the area as well as general running experience.
- **Health Condition**s - a well organised club should already have made the group leader aware of any relevant conditions e.g. asthma, diabetes, heart problems, limited hearing or vision.
- **Size** - inevitably a larger group (particularly of young athletes) will present more difficulties.

CONDITIONS

- **Weather** - snow, sleet, rain and wind may all increase the possibility of hypothermia. Strong winds increase the risks of falling branches etc. and of runners being blown in front of traffic. Exceptionally (in the UK) heat may be a problem.
- **Underfoot** - ice and compacted snow are common winter hazards.
  Mud and/or deep water are potential year round problems.
- **Daylight** - availability of daylight will particularly influence winter route choices.

THE ROUTE

- **Traffic** - the presence of traffic, the availability of footpaths and the need for major road crossings are all factors to consider.
- **Street lighting** - risks from traffic and of sprained ankles and falls will be reduced (in the absence of daylight) if well-lit routes are chosen.

- **Terrain** - often the purpose of a training session will be to train over more challenging terrain, but account must always be taken of weather conditions and the abilities of those in the training group.
- **Clarity** - is the route easy to follow or do all the runners already know it?

The basic question the group leader should ask is:
- **Is the route suitable for the people in this group in these conditions ?**

(In many situations there may also be a need to consider the availability of shorter return routes for the less fit or those developing injuries etc.)

PRECAUTIONS which can be taken to reduce the level of risk include:

SUITABLE EQUIPMENT

Runners have their own duty to come along suitably equipped for training sessions but a much more interventive approach should be taken for younger or less experienced runners. Making informal critical comments may be all it is reasonable to expect the group leader to do for experienced athletes (unless club rules on clothing are being breached).

- **Clothing** - high visibility or white clothing should be worn for training in hours of darkness, particularly if the route includes areas without street lights. Weather conditions may justify the wearing of adequate quantities of clothing and possibly windproof or weatherproof garments.
- **Footwear** - difficult terrain (fells, muddy routes) will justify the use of appropriate footwear.

COMMUNICATION

- **Information** - runners must be aware of the proposed route before they set off and of any other important information (e.g. 'holding points' - see below). For complicated routes issuing some photocopied maps may be appropriate. New athletes (particularly younger ones) must be made aware of any relevant rules e.g. re. audio equipment (see below).
- **Audio Equipment** - many clubs prohibit the use of this on club runs because of the difficulties of communication or hearing warnings, and decreased awareness of traffic.
- **Mobile Phone** - whilst this may only be a desirable feature to take on routine urban runs, it becomes much more important in difficult terrain or remote areas (assuming there is a signal) or bad weather.

ORGANISATION

- **'Sweepers'** - in larger groups, particularly with younger athletes, the appointment of one or more 'sweepers' to run at the rear should ensure no-one gets dropped off the rear of the group.

- **'Minders'** - for inexperienced athletes or those not sure of the route an informal 'minder' (of similar ability) will be beneficial.
- **'Holding Points'** - 'holding points' can be identified to everyone in advance (or to those at the front of the group) where the group (or sections of it) should wait and allow everyone to catch up, or jog back to meet those at the rear. This will often enhance the training experience for many as well as having safety benefits.
- **Road & Rail Crossings** - particularly for younger athletes there will be a need to designate busy road crossing and any rail crossings as 'holding points'.
- **Alternative Routes** - in seriously deteriorating weather conditions (or in the case of a serious injury) there may be a need to use a shorter or safer route back.
- **Checking** - a check should be made at the end that everyone is back safely. With a larger group a head count or confirmation by the 'sweeper(s)' may be necessary.
  If a runner cannot be accounted for then checks should be made with other runners, as well as of kit in the changing room or vehicles in the car park. It may be necessary to run or drive back along the route and/or make calls to mobile or home phones. The stage at which the emergency services will need to be involved will depend on various factors - the age and any health problems of the runner, weather conditions and the nature of the route.