Club Standard 7: Health and Safety Policy, including Risk Assessments

Istead and Ifield Harriers (the Club) aims to make club runs as safe as possible for all participants and to ensure that all runners complete their runs without suffering any type of injury. Safety is everyone's responsibility and in joining the Club you are deemed to have accepted the rules of the Club and agree to follow the safety guidelines set out below.

For runners

Before running
1) Please ensure that you are physically fit to run. Should you feel unwell, or be injured, it is better to give yourself time to recover than risk making your condition worse. Always seek medical advice prior to starting or restarting running if you have been on any form of medication or suffered an injury.
2) Please ensure that you wear suitable high-visibility clothing when joining a run and that you have the correct footwear. Clothing should be comfortable and not restrict movement. Tops should ideally be fluorescent or reflective. Consider wearing a light if running in the dark. Shoes designed for road running will normally be the most suitable for club runs. It is advisable for runners to have their running gait assessed in a specialist sports shop and to take the results into account when buying running shoes. Please do not wear headphones on club nights, we need you to be able to hear our Run Leaders and other members of your group.
3) If the weather is hot or you are running for a considerable amount of time, consider bringing a drink of water. Handheld water bottles are readily available both from running shops and online.
4) Always carry some form of identification.

Your run
5) The Club offers the opportunity to run in a group. Choose a group that suits your running ability. When attending for the first few times, it is advisable to run with a group that runs at a slower pace than what you believe to be your ideal level until you are familiar with the Club and the way it operates.
6) Ensure that you warm up before running. Your warm up should be specific to the type of run: for a steady run a slow first mile may suffice; for reps a more substantial warm up is required and your Run Leader will direct you.
7) Run Leaders have been briefed to ensure that, when running, no-one is left to run on their own and no individual or small group gets lost.
8) Always try to maintain visual contact with the runner immediately in front of you and stay aware of those behind you by making frequent visual checks.
9) Immediately report any injury or unwellness – whether affecting yourself or another runner – to your Run Leader. If someone is injured or unwell, it is the responsibility of each runner in the group to ensure that they receive prompt help and support from the Run Leader and other runners. If you have a medical condition or disability eg, diabetes, asthma, angina etc, please carry a note with you in case you should need medical attention during the run.
10) Unless absolutely essential, do not run in the road. Always take great care when crossing roads, especially when running in the dark.
11) Where necessary, shout out a warning of upcoming obstacles, obstructions or dangerous situations to other runners.
12) Respect your surroundings – don't run over areas that are not open to the public or are private property.

End of your run
13) Always ensure that you advise your Run Leader if you are going to drop out early to run home. Occasionally runners actually run past or near their homes during the latter parts of our runs and decide to go straight home. If you do this, please ensure that you inform your Run Leader. Likewise, if you have been told that a runner is leaving early, please communicate this to the Run Leader.
14) Always ensure that you report any missing runners immediately. At the end of the run please report any runners who you think might be missing. There may be a simple explanation, but it is better to be safe than sorry.

15) At the end of your run, cool down properly – reduce your pace as you near the end of your run, keep moving when you've finished the run and consider stretching. Your Run Leaders are able to assist with this.

For Run Leaders

General

16) Ensure you are certain of your run route. If it doesn't already have a risk assessment, prepare one prior to your run.
17) Clearly explain the distance that you intend to go and the rough pace at which the group will run. During the run, maintain clear communication with your group to ensure that everyone is comfortable with the pace. Carry your mobile phone with you.
18) Welcome any new members to the group and ensure that they are confident that they can maintain the stipulated pace. If you are in doubt, suggest that they begin with a slower group.
19) Ask the members of the group to keep an eye on each other to ensure that no-one gets isolated; it's OK for smaller groups to form, but no-one should be running on their own.
20) Ensure that all members of the group are warmed up before running. This warm up should be specific to the type of run that is happening: for a steady run a slow first mile may suffice; for reps a more substantial warm up is required.
21) Always run on public footpaths and pavements. When crossing roads, take particular care for your own safety as well as that of your fellow runners.

Running on trails

22) During the summer months, our runs are on trails in the countryside. This is the joy of summer running, but it is inherently more dangerous so the Club's safety guidance has to be closely observed. All groups must be off the trails before nightfall.

Accidents, illnesses and injuries

23) When a runner has an accident, their health and safety is the primary and overriding responsibility of the Run Leader. If a runner suffers a slip, trip or fall, they should be allowed to continue running only if the Run Leader is satisfied that they are fit to do so. If a runner is not fit to continue but is capable of walking, the Run Leader should ask whether another member of the group is willing to accompany them. If there is no volunteer able or willing to assist, the Run Leader must end the group run and return to the Club's HQ.
24) If the runner cannot walk, the Run Leader should call for a taxi to take the runner home. The Club will reimburse the cost in such circumstances. In case of a serious accident or other medical emergency, the Run Leader should call 999 for an ambulance.
25) All accidents should be reported in the Accident Book with details of what the accident was and where it occurred. This applies even where the runner has been able to continue running.

Risk Assessments

All run routes must be checked and risk assessed before being used by an organised Club run group. A list of risk assessed routes is available on request.

Adopted: March 2022
Reviewed: March 2025
To be reviewed again on: March 2028

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following Club Standards:

Constitution
Committee and Club Supporting Roles and Responsibilities
Grievance and Disciplinary
Privacy Notice (GDPR)
Inclusion and Diversity