

Covid-19 action plan for Lewes AC off-track activities/training runs

This **Covid-19 action plan** and accompanying **Covid-19 specific risk assessment** for off-track activities have been developed in compliance with current UK Government guidelines and sport-specific guidance as provided by England Athletics (EA).

As a first step towards fulfilling the requisite “return to play” protocols, Lewes Athletic Club (henceforth termed “the Club”) has appointed me, Mark Pappenheim, as the designated Covid-19 Coordinator for all its off-track activities.

By also completing the relevant activity-based risk assessments, by putting into place appropriate mitigating procedures to follow in the event of any injuries or other accidents occurring during Club runs/training sessions while still complying with Government guidance on social distancing and, finally, by ensuring that all coaches/leaders and other club members adhere to this guidance, the Club will be able to ensure a “**Covid secure environment**” for all its off-track activities, allowing a return to the usual EA-licensed coach:runner ratio of 1:12 (ie. with each coach/leader responsible for a maximum of 12 athletes/runners at any one time). Failure to ensure a “Covid secure environment” would mean that we would need to adhere instead to the current Government-mandated “Rule of 6” with a coach:runner ratio of 1:5.

I would here note in passing that, while the EA recommends that all clubs appoint a Covid-19 Coordinator, the EA’s “Guidance for Affiliated Clubs” stresses that “the Covid-19 Coordinator role is not expected to take full responsibility for all health and safety or risk assessment protocols implemented by the club. It is the responsibility of the club committee and key officers/volunteers to ensure protocols are implemented and reviewed across the club with the Covid-19 Coordinator acting as the key point of contact for related matters”.

The safety and well-being of all our athletes, runners, coaches/leaders and indeed the wider community lie at the heart of the new safety measures we are proposing. Our aim is to minimise exposure to risk as far as “reasonably practicable” (the requirement set by current Health & Safety legislation), so that all Club members can focus on enjoying their run without needlessly endangering either themselves, their fellow runners or the general public.

We will continue to review the situation on a regular basis and will adapt these measures as necessary to respond to any changes in Government or EA guidance or legislation.

Here follows a summary of the measures already taken, additional measures still to be taken, and further measures as yet to be discussed.

MEASURES ALREADY TAKEN

The main safety measures we have already put in place include:

- Ensuring that all Club members maintain the regulation social distancing before, during and after all activities

- Adhering to the current “Rule of 6” by restricting each run group to a maximum of 1 leader to 5 runners
- Instituting an online sign-up system both in order to keep numbers within the legal limits, by limiting the sign-up slots to 5 runners per leader/group, and also in order to keep a record of which runners and coaches/leaders have run with which group so as to facilitate future Track and Trace should any of the participants subsequently test positive for Covid-19
- Reminding all members to update their contact details on the Club’s online database so as to facilitate future Track and Trace should any Club runner subsequently test positive for Covid-19
- Starting all Tuesday-evening runs from separate locations away from the clubhouse in order to avoid mass gatherings at the start, and choosing suitable meeting points so as to allow for appropriate levels of social distancing both between club members and between club members and members of the public
- Suspending the usual monthly pub runs in order to reduce unnecessary contact with members of the public
- Restarting Saturday-morning daylight runs in order to reduce the risk of injury to runners and the potential need to call upon NHS resources
- Making hi-vis vests compulsory for all night-time runs, with all runners now expected to supply their own vests and no longer able to borrow shared vests from the clubhouse store in order to reduce potential spreading/transmission of Covid-19 via surface contact

• Publication of the following safety measures on the Club’s website (on the “Tuesday training” Wiki page):

Each coach/leader will have hand gel, gloves and mask with them so that they can help if there is any need for hands-on support.

Please:

- 1. Check that the name and phone number of your Contact (the person to call in case of an emergency) are up to date on our Love Admin database. Sign in at <https://app.loveadmin.com/sign-in>*
- 2. Bring with you either your mobile phone or a piece of paper / wristband with the name and phone number of your Contact*
- 3. Wash your hands before leaving the house*
- 4. Confirm to the coach or leader when you arrive that neither you nor anyone in your family has symptoms of Covid-19 (high temperature, new or continuous cough, loss of or change in sense of taste or smell)*
- 5. Observe the social distancing rule that is in force on the day (presently this is 2m between runners) at all times before, during and after the run*
- 6. Be aware especially that heavy breathing - as happens when we run! - produces the large respiratory droplets that carry the virus*
- 7. Be especially considerate of walkers, and pass them at a good distance, even if you have to stop running to do so*
- 8. If you become unwell in the days after your run please contact your coach or leader urgently*

ADDITIONAL MEASURES STILL TO BE TAKEN

The following safety measures need to be put in place in order to ensure a “Covid secure environment” for all our off-track activities, in compliance with EA guidance:

- instruct all Club members that they must NOT attend runs/training sessions if they have symptoms (or suspect they have symptoms), or have tested positive for Covid-19, or have come into contact with anyone who has tested positive for Covid-19 [**NB:** this is to comply with the EA “Health and Safety Guidance” document, “Key Points” para 9 – and it needs to be spelt out clearly on the “Tuesday training” Wiki page in place of the existing safety measure no. 4]
- inform all Club members that, should they themselves test positive for Covid-19 within 48 hours of attending a Club session, they MUST complete the UKA Covid-19 tracking form at www.uka.org.uk/governance/health-safety/covid-19-form/ [**NB:** again, this wording should replace the current safety measure no. 8 on the “Tuesday training” Wiki page]
- instruct all coaches/leaders to update the Wiki page immediately after our Tuesday-evening club runs, should there be any changes to the signed-up names, in order to maintain the accurate historical record of runs and runners required to facilitate any future Track and Trace.
- communicate this action plan to all Club members, in line with EA guidance, either by email or by posting it up on the Club website or both.
- add this Covid-19 specific risk assessment to the Club’s existing risk assessments

FURTHER MEASURES THAT COULD BE TAKEN

The following are a few further suggested safety measures that could be taken for additional safety but are not integral to ensuring a “Covid secure environment”:

- minimise the risk of spreading/transmitting Covid-19 via person-to-person or surface contact by discouraging runners from different households from car-sharing on the way to/from club sessions and reinforcing the UK Gov guidance that, if they must car-share, they should ideally wear masks, keep the windows open and, if possible, sit the passenger/s behind the driver
- minimise the risk of spreading/transmitting Covid-19 via surface contact on routes that might involve gates or stiles by stipulating that only coaches/leaders can open/close/handle any gates and must then either sanitise their hands afterwards or wear gloves throughout the run - or ask all runners to wear gloves at all times and/or to carry their own hand sanitiser - or simply suspend all cross-country runs for the duration of the pandemic (unless coaches/leaders can assure the Covid-19 Coordinator in advance that no gates or stiles will be encountered on their chosen route)
- minimise the risk of spreading/transmitting Covid-19 via person-to-person or surface contact during session work by banning/adapting sessions that might involve any such contact, eg. ban high-fives/baton-exchanges (or replace with elbow taps?) during meet-greet-and-retreat sessions; discourage group exercise sessions including, eg. group press-ups on public pavements; discourage group cool-down sessions including, eg. calf stretches against public walls or fences

Mark Pappenheim (LiRF, Lewes AC), 18 September 2020