<u>Tips for Run Leaders</u>

<u>Planning and Preparation</u>

- Ensure that you can easily and comfortably run at the pace of the group you have chosen to lead.
- Plan your route in advance.
- Ensure that you have recently run your route, so you are aware of any potential hazards.
- Things to consider when planning your route:
  - ✓ How far do you want to run? Think about how long your group will be out running for at your intended pace and set the length of your route accordingly. If you are leading a faster paced group, you will cover more distance.
  - ✓ What is the lighting like on your planned run? All runners should be wearing high-viz during autumn/winter months but think about whether you need to advise them to wear extra lighting e.g. a head torch.
  - ✓ What is the terrain like? Do you need to advise your runners to wear trail shoes?
  - ✓ Consider the weather on the day or days leading up to your run – you might need to check your route is still safe and change it if necessary.
  - ✓ How hilly is your route? If it is particularly hilly you may want to reduce the distance as it will be a harder run.
  - ✓ Try to stick to pavements, if you have to go on a road make sure you follow the high-way code and run in single file on the right hand side of the road, towards oncoming traffic

<u>Before the run</u>

- Ensure you have a phone in case of emergencies.
- Briefly explain where you will be going (people find it reassuring to have a rough idea and it will help you to better support the group during the run.)
- Inform anyone of any potential hazards on your route (make sure you remind them as you are approaching too.)
- Ask if anyone has injuries.
- Ask if it's anybody's first run or first time running in that pace group – this may dictate your pace so be prepared to potentially run at a slower pace or to regroup/double back.
- Make sure everybody has adequate lighting/is wearing high-viz during autumn/winter months.
- Count how many runners you have.

<u>Warm-up</u>

All runs should begin with a warm-up. We don't usually have much space or time to do a full warm-up so a good alternative is to do it as you begin your run. Run the first half mile of your run slightly slower, gradually increasing the pace. If you feel comfortable to do so you could also include some bum kicks, high knees, side steps, even lunges at the very beginning of your run (just make sure you warn everyone this is going to happen.) If you don't feel comfortable in leading any form of warm-up please advise your group to arrive at the run already warmed up.

During the run

- It is really important that nobody gets left behind, even if they are not running at the intended pace of the group. The pace should be dictated by that of the slowest runner (if that runner is running much slower than the intended pace this can be addressed after the run.) If you have runners who are faster, suggest a point where they stop and wait or suggest they loop back (if everyone has chosen the correct pace group this shouldn't happen too much.) If runners have stopped ahead and waited, don't set off straight away, this isn't fair to the runners who have only just got there.
- Try not to stay at the front for the whole run. Consider leading from the back as it's easier to see the whole of your group and the runner at the back of the pack is more likely to need your support than the runner at the front. So instead of nominating a 'back marker', nominate a 'front marker', choose somebody who you know can run the intended pace and inform them of the route (this can always be done in advance if you know who will be in your group.) Another option is to move up and down your line of runners, between the front and the back, throughout the run to check everybody is okay.
- If you have a particularly large group and your find that there is a big split between the runners it may be sensible to split your group. Choose another experienced runner or run leader and if they are happy to they could branch off and form their own group.
- Look out for pedestrians, they have the right of way. Don't run in large groups on the pavement – no more than two abreast.
- Be careful when crossing the road – wait until you have all of your group with you and then cross the road.
- Warn your group of any upcoming hazards identified pre-run and encourage those at the front of the group to shout if they see hazards e.g. bikes, dogs, cars.
- Ensure that someone escorts runners who are unable to continue due to injury or illness, back to the start (don't forget to check that they got home okay after the run.)

After the run

- Cool down – this is really important. You could demonstrate stretches yourself, or if you don't feel comfortable doing this ask runners to carry out their own stretches. Each stretch should be held for up to 15 seconds. If you don't have anywhere safe to carry out stretches make sure you ask runners to stretch when they get home.
- Feedback – ask if everybody enjoyed the run and let them know you are happy to hear any feedback.
- Decide whether you will use your route again or whether it needs any alterations to make it even better next time.
- Report any issues to the Club Captain.
- Relax, you earned it! 😊