

Working with England Athletics affiliated clubs

Run in England was created to engage with the 60% or more of people who still do less than 3x30 minutes of exercise per week, and to support those unattached runners who, for one reason or another, have chosen NOT to join a club more effectively.

The emphasis and the marketing of **Run in England** is aimed at those relatively new to running, and at the complete novice or 'couch potato' who might be inspired – perhaps by a local charity event or something in their own lives – to get involved in the world of recreational running.

As most of us are aware from our own passion for the sport, once bitten ... !

And, having been bitten by the wonderful running bug, many runners are eager to progress and improve, and want to enter more and more events.

Run in England is NOT a club with a competition licence. It will support new runners and signpost them to their local clubs.

Of course, this task would be so much simpler and smoother if we could engage regular club runners as Leaders for the **Run in England** groups.

On the proven basis of 'follow my leader', significantly more runners would progress to club running if they knew that the supportive, informed Leader who has steered them through their first painful steps would also be at the club to welcome and introduce them.

A potential model for such a partnership is outlined below.

Satellite beginner groups

A club finds runners willing to train as Leader(s) through the **Leadership in Running Fitness** course and start a **Run in England** group or groups .

The group may or may not be on the same night, or in the same location. In fact they could work as a series of **satellites** in local towns, villages, workplace etc within the club catchment area.

Some groups may be age, gender or community specific to attract different people.

Run in England Leaders can register at no cost if they are working on behalf of an England Athletics affiliated club.

Registered Leaders are expected to follow a Code of Conduct in order to ensure customer care and set a consistent standard.

Registration gives access to:

- **Run in England** website information and activities.
- **Run in England** Leader top.
- 10-week course plan.
- Resources to match those received by their group participants.

A **Run in England** Leader can have their club name on their leader top in addition to **Run in England**, for example: 'do running with ... Birchfield Harriers'.

Registered Leaders will be supported by the **Run in England** area staff and national team. Leaders are expected to complete an annual Self-evaluation Form to ensure that they are receiving adequate support, advice and training, and that organisations can be confident in their abilities.

All participants join the Run in England beginner programme.

This 10-week course is offered at £40, £20 of which is returned with the membership forms to **Run in England** (online membership is also available).

Participants receive

- A technical 'T'.
- A log book specially tailored for beginners, mirroring the Leader's 10-week plan.
- A hand-held water bottle.
- Information about local clubs could be offered towards the end of the course.

If the Leader is acting on behalf of a club, then the remaining funds belong to the club to be used for any purpose they see fit (e.g. training further Leaders, putting on local events etc).

If the Leader is self-employed then the fee belongs to them (and they will of course declare this income to HM Revenue & Customs).

At the end of the 10-week course the Leader may advertise and run subsequent courses at suitable intervals, or may continue with an improvers group for those not yet ready to move on. It is the Leader's choice.

The Leader may support participants to join their club.

Benefits to a club

- Separate **Run in England** satellites can encourage novices who may otherwise be put off.
- A club logo appearing on the Leader's tops advertises the club to participants.
- Income for the club: 20 per person x up to 15 new runners = up to £300 for each course.
- No limit to the number of courses that can be run.
- Potential new members for the club – all with at least 10 weeks running experience.
- **Run in England** proved support Leaders based at the club – so they don't have to.
- More qualified leaders available for existing club runs.
- Potential to link with local 10k, 10 mile or half marathon events, with special **Run in England** training groups to prepare participants – and provide another potential source of new members.
- For each participant who transfers to a club, a refund of £5 will be offered to reduce that year's membership fee (equivalent to the cost of the competition licence).
- Online entry for all satellite groups.
- Clubs with qualified Leaders supporting beginners can have a link from the **Run in England** website to their club web pages.
- **Run in England** Partner logo for the club.

Benefit to participants

- Safe and supportive introduction to running through a programme specially designed for them.
- An introduction, through their Leader, to the support and friendliness of the club environment.
- Belonging to a national programme with recognised kit, training plan and web pages.
- The Leader can evaluate when participants are ready for club running, so they can avoid joining a club before they are able to cope – and exiting prematurely.
- Reduction in joining fee of £10 through the reimbursement scheme.

Benefits to our sport

- The knowledge that new runners are being supported into running – safely and effectively.
- Runners in events will be properly prepared for the task they are undertaking.

Example club partnership

Burgess Hill Runners have already signed up in accordance with the above model. Two runners were keen to set up a separate group to cater for the complete beginner. The club agreed to adopt this approach and the group will start on 25th November 2009.

Norwich Road Runners want to get a number of runners trained to lead club groups. They particularly liked:

- Using separate **Run in England** sessions to ease the pressure on club nights, especially from new runners who will be at a very different level.
- The potential of **Leadership in Running Fitness** and **Run in England** to encourage runners to build up their leadership skills - they can learn their trade with beginners' groups (while still running in normal club night sessions) and then progress to Levels 1, 2 and 3 if they wish.

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