



Dorset Doodlers – Protocol for Summer Runs

Background: England Athletics have introduced a series of mandatory 'Club Standards', which are a set of seven protocols that every EA affiliated club must adhere to from 1st April 2025. Parts of these protocols require much more accountability for clubs' group running activity, such as our Doddler Tuesday Summer Runs. Both the club and individual members have signed up to these Standards as per the membership joining or renewal procedure.

1. 'Risk Assessment' – for Off-Road Runs / Club Summer Runs

The Committee has drawn up a document which highlights the 'off-road risks / potential hazards' which could be encountered. This covers most of the risks envisaged and historically experienced.

2. Running Groups

With the move away from run marking and maps, running in groups with a designated Group Leader has become the norm and the way the runs are mainly now conducted. As such, certain protocols need to be highlighted.

• Group Leaders:

- should be a responsible person in charge of each group – ideally "EA qualified", but if not, then an experienced club member;
- should establish with runners which distance route they will be leading and at what approx pace they will be running;
- should know who is in their group and be able to account for them;
- should ideally carry a mobile phone to communicate if getting lost, a lost runner, an injury, an emergency injury, etc.

• Whilst Group Leaders should be responsible for their group, individuals should still be responsible for their own safety, with a collective group responsibility for the safety of all. Volunteering to lead a group should not discourage Group Leaders or overload responsibility on them.

• Running in groups should discourage lone runners, no runners being left behind by a group.

• Group terminology: initially, groups should be designated by route distance, rather than by pace. Once a respective group route distance has been established, the appropriate pace within that group should then be established. If practical, sub groups within a route group can run at different paces. Groups should feel inclusive, and avoid runners feeling that "they can't do a particular route because the fast runners won't regroup".



3. The Young (children) & Vulnerable Adults

The club membership is an adult only membership, for adults over the age of 18 years. Therefore, if juniors under 18 years join in with a Summer Run, they must be accompanied by a responsible adult/parent/carer who will take full responsibility for them, and it be made clear that they are participating at their own risk.

Vulnerable adults should likewise be accompanied by a responsible person who will take responsibility for them.

4. Car Parking

We encourage car sharing. Cars are parked at their owners' risk. Members should comply with requests made by the venue host – pub, private residents etc. Please park with consideration for other non-running members of the public.

5. Countryside Code

Observe the Countryside code: leave gates etc as people find them; no damage to gates, fences, other countryside property; keep to public rights of way / permissive paths etc; no littering.

6. Dogs

Dogs are permitted on the Summer Runs, but must be kept under control, both on and/or off the lead and not be a hindrance to other runners/walkers and members of the public.

Owners and handlers should refer to the Countryside Code as regards interaction with livestock and wildlife.

7. Medical / First Aid

The club's portable defibrillator will be present at most Summer Runs. During the run brief, it should be pointed out who has it and where it will be for that particular run.

Various members/runners at each run will have a degree of First Aid capability, hopefully including potential Run Leaders. Ideally, these people should be identified during the run briefing in case there is a need to enlist their assistance.

8. Club Membership

Summer Runs form part of the club's regular running activity and are provided by the members for the members. The club now has to be more accountable for its activities through the EA Club Standards and has a duty of care to its members. Therefore, participants should be encouraged to join the club if they intend to run regularly on the Summer Runs; these weekly runs are not a public service. Obviously, guests and potential members will be welcomed, but the club's position should be that any regularly attending runner should join the club for the current membership year. Membership should be encouraged at each run briefing, so people are made aware of this.