Avon Valley Runners

**The AVR Wiltshire Half Marathon**

**Sunday 26th November 2023**

**11am.**


# Safety Risk Assessment

**Status:** Final

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**Abstract.**

This Safety Risk Assessment describes the risks identified, with controls and mitigations implemented by the Avon Valley Runners club officers responsible for the safe organisation of ‘The AVR Wiltshire Half Marathon’ road running race held in the autumn/winter.

**Applicability.**

This Safety Risk Assessment is applicable to the ‘The AVR Wiltshire Half Marathon’ road running race to be held in November 2023, as organised by the Avon Valley Runners club officers with due diligence from their duty of care perspective. It is applicable for up to 425 competitors and 100 race officials.

**Background.**

The “AVR Wiltshire Half Marathon” is a road running race hosted by Avon Valley Runners. The race has been successfully held in November of 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2021, 2022 respectively, with up to 425 entrants and an average of 100 organisational staff. Key staff include a Race Director, Race Organiser and Chief Marshal who are experienced and competent in running events.

**Route.**

The race starts and finishes in the grounds of Station Yard, Edlington and progresses for 13.1 miles in a figure of 8-loop style along minor country roads before returning to the finish. The race is held on a Sunday morning starting at 11am and is normally completed within 3 hours.

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**Mandated conditions of entry.**

To enhance safety and reduce risk the event organisers have decided on the following mandated conditions of entry:

**Age of runners.** Runners are to be older than 17 years on race day. This prevents inexperienced and immature runners from attending the event.

**Banning the use of personal media players**. The use of personal devices, which involve headphones/earphones is banned, so as to maximise the chances of runners hearing road traffic and marshals instructions, whilst participating in the race.

**Competitors indicate fitness to participate**.

Competitors are asked to indicate their fitness to participate and acceptance of minor sports injuries through the ticking the disclaimer as part of the automated entry form, see below:

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| I declare that I shall abide by the rules of the race. I will follow all instructions given by race officials. I am not under the minimum age to compete in this event. I accept that the organisers will not be liable for any loss or damage, action, claim, cost or expenses, which may arise as a consequence of my participation in this event. I declare that I agree with the terms and conditions of event entry and will not compete in this race unless I am in good health on the day of the race and that in any case I will only compete at my own risk.Full terms and conditions can be found on the website at ***www.avrwiltshirehalfmarathon.org*** |

**Event site facilities.**

Station Yard has been selected as both the Race Village for parking, race organisation and also as the Start and Finish area.

**Parking.**

There are sufficient car park spaces in Station Yard to accommodate 80 cars. Entry to the car park is via a single, gated entrance from a straight minor road, which also has a grass verge to accommodate a further 100 cars.

**Race Village**.

The Race HQ will be a marque in the Race Village grounds with further shelter providing ample changing and baggage storage for 425 competitors, although it is anticipated that the majority of competitors will not use the Race Village facilities and will opt to leave their belongings in their cars. This has been assessed from competitor’s behaviour at previous races and other recent events e.g. the Corsham 10k and the ’Over the Hills’). Toilet facilities will be hired using appropriate hire companies. Although a marshal will be appointed to provide security and organisation to the changing areas competitors will be advised in posted, pre-race instructions, that they do this at their own risk. This will be reiterated at the pre-race, competitors briefing. There are no showering facilities available and this will be highlighted on the race entry forms.

**Marshalling.**

Marshals are provided by Avon Valley Runners. Marshals are verbally briefed on their responsibilities for the direction and control of runners and spectators, incident reporting and response to Emergencies.
Marshals are given strict instruction that traffic has priority over runners at all times and that they are not permitted to stop or control the flow of traffic in any way.
Marshals also have issued mobile numbers of the key race officials to whom they report incidents.

Marshals are also reminded not to park on top of key turning points they marshal so as to not cause obstructions to road visibility.

**First Aid.**

First aid support is always provided by a 3rd party using a minimum of two medics and a vehicle and will have allocated parking space within the event site.

More information about the event can be found at the Avon Valley Runners club website at:

**www.avonvalleyrunners.org.uk**

**Risk Overview.**

The manageable risks\* associated with the running of the event\*\* have been identified and for each risk described, a cause highlighted along with the controls and mitigations that can be taken to reduce the risks as low as reasonably practical to acceptable levels. The impact of the risk should it occur is also described and what actions can be taken in the event of its occurrence. The probability of the risk occurring is also stated and contributes to the risks Severity value, calculated as the Probability against Impact as shown in the table below:

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| IMPACT | HIGH | MEDIUM | MEDIUM | HIGH |
| MEDIUM | MEDIUM | MEDIUM | MEDIUM |
| LOW | LOW | MEDIUM | MEDIUM |
|  | LOW | MEDIUM | HIGH |
| PROBABILITY |

The Impact is graded according to the following criteria:

* LOW – Verbal complaint(s) by greater than 2% of the entrants or by any third party.
* MEDIUM – Minor injury and/or written complaint by an entrant or by any third party.
* HIGH – Serious injury to an entrant.

The key risks that have been identified are those due to the potential weather conditions in winter, the nature of the road surface, and group that relate to the other users of the minor roads which the ‘AVR Wiltshire Half Marathon’ race course utilises, including: motor vehicles, cyclists, walkers, horses with riders and farm animals (cattle) crossing the course.

These road risks will be managed with the positioning of high visibility 'caution runners’ signage on key minor road approaches to the course, on and around the actual course, both prior to and during the event, and the positioning of race marshals at key points on the course. Other risks relating to the crossing of junctions on the course will be re-iterated to competitors as part of the pre-race briefing and if it is not accepted the runner(s) will be asked to withdraw from the event and offered a full refund on any entry fee paid.

*\*The risks identified do not include those relating to natural disaster, civil disturbance or other force majeure.*

*\*\* Other non-safety risks to the financial, organisational or administrative functions of the event are not covered by this assessment.*

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| **RISK #1 – Cold Injuries** |
| Description: | Runners may suffer cold injuries and exposure  |
| Causes: | Prolonged exposure to winter weather conditions |
| Mitigations and controls: | Requirement for the runners to have an acceptable level of pre run fitnessReiteration of the risk during the runners pre-run briefing and any runner not willing to accept this risk will be asked not to runCloser proximity of competitor’s car parking to the eventPrompt start times to reduce waiting time |
| Assessment: | MEDIUM probability of occurringMEDIUM impact.**MEDIUM risk** |
| Incident actions: | Should a runner suffer injury, then the marshals will have means of communication to the Race Director who can then alert first aid staff to the situation |

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| **RISK #2- Trip Hazards** |
| Description: | Runners may trip and suffer injury i.e. twisted ankle, bruising, cuts & abrasions relating to a fall |
| Causes: | Loose surface debris on the courseTractors and other farm vehicles that use the minor roads |
| Mitigations and controls: | Requirement for the runners to have an acceptable level of pre run fitnessReiteration of the risk during the runners pre-run briefing and any runner not willing to accept this risk will be asked not to run |
| Assessment: | LOW probability of occurringMEDIUM impact.**MEDIUM risk** |
| Incident actions: | Should a runner suffer injury, then the marshals will have means of communication to the Race Director who can then alert First Aid staff to the situation |

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| **Risk #3 Car Parking** |
| Description: | Runners and spectators will encounter motor vehicles in the car parking areas |
| Causes: | Caused by the use of the Station Yard and approach roads by parking cars and local traffic |
| Mitigations and controls: | ‘Caution Runners’ large signs posted either side of the entrance to advise drivers using this road Station Yard entrance will be marshalled before and during the race. Four marshals will act as parking supervisors to ensure that people park safely and correctly in positions that do not restrict the course of the race, or restrict and hazard other road users |
| Assessment: | MEDIUM probability of occurringHIGH impact**MEDIUM risk** |
| Incident actions: | Should a runner suffer injury, then the marshals will have means of communication to the Race Director who can then alert First Aid staff to the situation |

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| **Risk #4 – Motor vehicles on minor roads** |
| Description: | At the start of the race runners will emerge from a side road and join the main carriageway.Runners will encounter motor vehicles along the minor roads on the Race Course and an obstruction may occur. |
| Causes: | Race Course utilising minor roads that are open to motor vehicles and regularly used by local residents and spectators |
| Mitigations and controls: | The start is managed by the use of “spotters” placed on the railway bridge who have a clear view of the road in both directions.They will indicate to the race director when the road is sufficiently clear of traffic to minimise the risk of runners and vehicles coming into conflict.Reiteration of the risk to runners during the pre-run briefing including the recommendation to run on pavements where available.‘Caution runners’ signage on and around the course.Positioning of marshals at key points on the course, and those marshals deterring spectator parking and obstructing the road at key turning and crossing points |
| Assessment: | MEDIUM probability of occurringHIGH impact**MEDIUM risk** |
| Incident actions: | Should a runner encounter a vehicle obstruction they give way and report the incident to the race organisers |

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| **RISK #5 – Crossing the road for Right Turn Junctions.** |
| Description: | Runners will encounter vehicles when crossing to turn in to right turn junctions at two locations |
| Causes: | Use of the minor roads by local traffic |
| Mitigations and controls: | Reiteration of the risk to runners during the pre-run briefing.‘Caution runners’ signage on and around the course.Positioning of marshals at key points on the course, and those marshals deterring spectator parking and obstructing the road at key turning and crossing points. |
| Assessment: | HIGH probability of occurringMEDIUM impact.**MEDIUM risk** |
| Incident actions: | Should a runner encounter a vehicle obstruction they give way and report the incident to the race organisers |

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| **RISK #6 – Emerging from left hand junctions in to minor roads.** |
| Description: | Runners will encounter traffic at junction approx. 6 ½ miles on route map  |
| Causes: | Emerging from a minor road onto a minor road that is close to A350, which can carry a higher volume of faster vehicles than other minor roads. |
| Mitigations and controls: | Reiteration of the risk to runners during the pre-run briefing.‘Caution runners’ signage on approach to this particular area.Positioning of marshals at this key point on the course, and those marshals deterring spectator parking and obstructing the road. |
| Assessment: | MEDIUM probability of occurringHIGH impact.**MEDIUM risk** |
| Incident actions: | Should a runner encounter a vehicle obstruction they give way and report the incident to the race organisers |

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| **RISK#7 – Crossroads at Great Hinton.** |
| Description: | Runners will encounter traffic at the crossroads at 4 miles on the route map |
| Causes: | Use of the minor roads by local traffic |
| Mitigations and controls: | Reiteration of the risk to runners during the pre-run briefing.Positioning of marshals and a dedicated crossing monitor marshal.‘Caution runners’ signage. |
| Assessment: | HIGH probability of occurringMEDIUM impact.**MEDIUM risk** |
| Incident actions: | Should a runner encounter a vehicle obstruction they give way and report the incident to the race organisers |

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| **RISK #8 – Walkers, horse and riders**. |
| Description: | Runners will encounter groups of walkers and horse and riders.Reiteration of the risk to runners during the pre-run briefing.Positioning of caution signage on and around the course positioning of marshals at key points on the course. |
| Causes: | Use of the minor roads by local traffic |
| Mitigations and controls: | Reiteration of the risk to runners during the pre-run briefing.Positioning of marshals and a dedicated crossing monitor marshal.‘Caution runners’ signage. |
| Assessment: | MEDIUM probability of occurring HIGH impact.**MEDIUM risk** |
| Incident actions: | Should a runner encounter an other road user obstruction they give way and report the incident to the race organisers |

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| **RISK #9 – Cattle Crossing** |
| Description: | Runners may encounter cattle crossing from farmyard to field at approx. 11 ½ miles on the route map. |
| Causes: | Route passing over an established farm area.  |
| Mitigations and controls: | Reiteration of the risk to runners during the pre-run briefing.Liaising with the farmer beforehand with a proposed window of time that the runners may be passing, and requesting if possible that the farmer avoids crossing the cattle during that window. |
| Assessment: | LOW probability of occurringHIGH impact.**MEDIUM risk** |
| Incident actions: | Should a runner encounter crossing cattle they give way and report the incident to the race organisers |

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| **RISK #10 – Media mini Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV)** |
| Description: | Uncontrolled descent of a mini UAV filming the event onto runners, spectators and marshals |
| Causes: | Loss of control of the mini UAV by the operators |
| Mitigations and controls: | UAV performance and operators competenceUAV take-off, landing and aerial operation away from people. Dedicated take-off, landing and operating space de-conflicting with runners, spectators and marshalsLiaising with the UAV operators beforehand with a proposed window of take-off and landing times when runners may be passing the operating site |
| Assessment: | LOW probability of occurringHIGH impact.**MEDIUM risk** |
| Incident actions: | Should a runner suffer injury, then the marshals will have means of communication to the Race Director who can then alert First Aid staff to the situation |

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| **Risk Assessment Statement**  |
| **Risks at the event to runners, spectators and race officials have been reduced as low a reasonably practicable to acceptable levels** |
| Mitigations and controls will be put in place for the event under the direction and organisation of the Race Organisers |