



AVON VALLEY RUNNERS

EST. TROWBRIDGE 1986





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WHO ARE AVON VALLEY RUNNERS?

Avon Valley Runners (AVR) is a running and multi-sport club based in Trowbridge, Wiltshire. The club was established back in 1896, and at present has over 300 members.

The object of AVR is the promotion of social and competitive participation in road, cross-country and multi-terrain running and multi-discipline events such as duathlons and triathlons. The mission statement is to be the club of choice for runners in West Wiltshire and to be recognised as a club of excellence and support for the promotion of running as a sport and a recreational pursuit.

AVR welcomes all running abilities, from the social runner to the competitive runner, and is open to ages 11+. The AVR Youth section of the club is suitable for those between 11 - 16 years of age, with the adult groups being for those over the age of 16.

Ensuring suitability for all members, the club offers a variety of training sessions each week based in Trowbridge and surrounding areas, as well as a wide selection of events throughout the year. Alongside this, the club champions those new to the sport of running by regularly hosting a 'Couch to 5k' course.



THE HISTORY OF THE CLUB

Started in 1986, Avon Valley Runners has been based in Trowbridge, Wiltshire for over 35 years.

After taking the decision to resign from the original Trowbridge Athletics Club, ten runners set up a new running club with a distance focus and a clear intention to keep things “as informal as possible” - and Avon Valley Runners was born. The name was chosen to reflect the modest aspirations of the ten founding members: a friendly, uncomplicated association of distance runners whose favourite stomping-ground was, and would be, the scenic and testing valley of the River Avon.

It would be no exaggeration to say that the late Stan Farr was the founding father of AVR. His experience and selfless work as Secretary for twenty years, with the help of his wife, Judy, led through all the formalities of dealing with the Amateur Athletics Association (now England Athletics).

The first time that any runners competed under AVR was on Sunday 1st January 1986 in the annual Melksham 15-kilometre road race. Word got about, and in no time at all numbers rose from the initial dozen to around 60 members by the end of the first year, and nearly one hundred at the end of the third year.

As a new club, there was a want to contribute to the local calendar of races. One venture was the AVR 10K road race in Trowbridge, which was popular and successful from 1991 until 1998.

From 1997 the club begun putting resources into a multi-terrain race which invited athletes to compete in the Avon and Frome valleys; and the Over the Hills race, conceived by Bernie Hobbs and Colin Williamson, continues to attract capacity entries to the present day.

In 1998, founding member Tom Roberts began a series of handicaps over the testing Jones Hill/Avoncliff course of about three miles, held on the last Thursdays of May, June and July, which lasted until 2000.

From its modest aspirations, the club has developed to stage many races throughout the year; both closed races which are open only to club members with a social and fun aspect to them, and highly regarded marquee races and series of events which are popular with our own members, other clubs and indeed many who travel from afar to participate.

AVR has become a highly successful competitive running club with numerous team wins in the Wiltshire race leagues, and its female and male runners are often seen scooping overall race and age category wins. Several club members have represented the club internationally, and even record holders are boasted within its numbers!

Key to the club's competitive success has been its ability to provide a supportive environment in which individuals can thrive. Unusually for a club of its size, AVR has a large number of England Athletics licensed coaches, and is therefore able to run high quality group training sessions and to offer one to one personalised training.

In 2017 after a successful fundraising effort, the club opened its own running track at the Trowbridge Rugby Football Club from which a comprehensive range of training sessions could be offered.

Today, remaining true to its heritage, the club continues to cater for those athletes who are primarily interested in general fitness in a social setting. The club boasts a high number of qualified run leaders who regularly take out social run groups, trips to distant Parkruns are organised, and purely social events and parties have become a core part of what today makes AVR such an exceptional club.

As you have read, AVR has a rich history filled with a host of incredible individuals that have helped to shape and develop the club since 1986.

If you would like to read a more in-depth history of the club and more on those who have made the club what it is today, please visit

www.avonvalleyrunners.org.uk/history-avr

MEMBERSHIP OPTIONS



As a member of Avon Valley Runners you are a member of one of the largest most successful clubs in Wiltshire. As such you will receive the following:

- Support and encouragement for your running, cycling and any other sporting venture you decide to try
- Access to all levels of training to suit your needs
- Access to recreational and social events
- Lots of opportunities to help organise races and events
- Free entry to a selection of events such as the AVR Relays.
- Social functions to enable you to share stories of your ventures and success' with other members
- Annual awards to recognise success in these events
- Free regular training sessions available including both coached and social runs 4 times a week.
- Membership to Avon Valley Triathletes, our multi-sport group.
- Opportunities to run at regional and national events (e.g. National Cross Country) which you can only do as a member of a club, EA membership is required for these events.



EA COMPETITIVE MEMBERSHIP

This membership option includes England Athletics (EA) membership for the year. EA membership will be required if you intend to enter any track or cross country event licensed by EA/UKA. EA membership will also give you a reduced entry fee to UKA/EA road races and eligibility to be included for any team prizes at these events.

DID YOU KNOW?

Each year, based on the current amount of EA affiliated members, the club is offered **London Marathon places**. A fair club ballot is run each year in order to decide the lucky recipient(s)!

TRAINING OVERVIEW

GROUP RUNS

01.

Each week there are numerous evening group runs that take place Monday through to Thursday from either Trowbridge Rugby Club or Bradford-on-Avon.

These sociable group runs are at varying paces to ensure there are options for all abilities - and you can simply choose which you wish to run with on the night! These groups are led by a qualified run leader (LiRF or CiRF). Additional specific training sessions, such as hill training, are also available on a periodic basis.



What is a LiRF?

A Leadership in Running Fitness qualification is gained through England Athletics. This trains individuals to be able to provide a safe and enjoyable running experience for others.

TRACK SESSIONS

02.

On a weekly basis the club also runs structured interval training sessions, including coached running drills, led by qualified CiRFs. These interval based training sessions cater for all abilities and are held on our own running track facility located at Trowbridge Rugby Club.

In addition, the club periodically organises coached track days for members at the renowned 400m athletics track at the University of Bath.



What is a CiRF?

A Coach in Running Fitness is the qualification required to become an England Athletics Licensed Running Coach. Once licensed, the coach is able to deliver general and event specific training to both groups and individuals in all aspects of running performance.

BEGINNERS

03.

Each year the club runs a beginners course which is open to all, whether you are new to running or returning after a break. Over the 12 weeks, participants will build up their running stamina with a group of friendly and welcoming volunteers who will support you to hit 5km by the end.

Following this the club also offers further development courses, such as our 5k to 10k Improvers group, to continue supporting those new to running on their journey.



AVR YOUTH

04.

AVR has a training offering specifically for its Youth section (11-16 year olds), which aims to help all young runners achieve their best, in a fun, safe and supportive environment. This includes specialist trained coaches who deliver sessions every week.

SOCIAL RUNNING

As well as planned and structured training sessions, there is always an array of social runs organised throughout the year for members to get involved with. For example, each year a Christmas Eve run is organised from Bradford-on-Avon - with breakfast at the end!

ONE-TO-ONE COACHING

05.

A somewhat unique offering from AVR is the selection of qualified coaches who provide one-to-one training and support to members of all abilities. This may include structured training plans to reach a goal race, or simply support and advice to help with overall performance improvement.

PARKRUN TOURISM

parkrun events take place nationwide, every Saturday morning at 9AM. Despite having a raft of events within a stones throw of Trowbridge, sometimes the club enjoys travelling to some of those that are further afield together in a hired mini bus.

AVON VALLEY TRIATHLETES



Avon Valley Triathletes (AVT) is the multi-sport arm of Avon Valley Runners, for those who may be a multiple Ironman, or thinking of trying duathlon for the very first time. AVT provides training in both cycling and swimming, as well as joining other AVR members for the running provision.

It's easy for you to get involved as a member of AVR, as you are automatically a member of AVT at no extra charge!

The ambition of AVT is to promote enjoyment of multi-sport, with a belief that being a member of a supportive group with similar interests makes us all better individually. No matter the challenge being taken up, from the first time to the fortieth, AVT will provide encouragement, advice, and consistent support throughout.

For anyone interested in triathlon, duathlon or similar, AVT hosts various training sessions including coached swimming sessions, bike sessions for all abilities covering different distances, and a regular run, bike or brick session, followed by breakfast, on a Saturday morning.

You can find out more about our multi-sport arm on the website, or get in touch with the AVT Secretary on avt@avonvalleyrunners.org.uk



OUR RACES

Open Races

AVR organised, open for anyone to take part.

WESTBURY 5K

The Westbury 5k series usually takes place over 3 or 4 events, organised between May and September each year. This no-frills event is a proven fast and flat course in Westbury, Wiltshire with chip timing.

OVER THE HILLS

Friendly and fun, an ideal introduction to off-road running starting in Bradford-on-Avon. The run is predominantly off-road, combining canal towpaths and river meadows with hilly woodland and a fording of the River Frome.

IMBER ULTRA

An annual friendly and affordable 33 mile trail run organised by AVR and the Rotary Club of Westbury, mainly following the Imber Range Perimeter Path (IRPP), via five well stocked checkpoints.

AVON VALLEY RELAY

The Avon Valley Relay is a 17 mile 'pass the baton' relay over four self-navigated stages along the roads and towpaths between Winsley and Trowbridge through the beautiful Avon Valley. The event is also open to solo runners who wish to run all four stages of the relay.

THE AVR WILTSHIRE HALF MARATHON

This 13.1 mile road race begins in the village of Edington and the route passes through plenty of the beautiful Wiltshire countryside. Attracting around 300 runners, this event takes place in late-November each year and raises money for local charity, Wiltshire Air Ambulance.



OUR RACES

Closed Races

AVR organised, only for members to take part (or, in some instances, invited local clubs).

MOB MATCH

The event, which is open to AVR members and invited local clubs, is the Over The Hills course - only backwards! Match points are determined against the finishing positions of the runners belonging to the same club/sex up to the number of the lowest attending club. There are no marshals and runners are expected to be familiar with the route.

BERN COL RELAY

A firm club favourite and a fun social event for members taking place annually in Bradford-on-Avon. The relay teams are picked at random on the night. Members are seeded and placed into 3 groups. Mixed teams of 3 are then picked - one from each group. Best of all, there are FREE chips for all runners at the end!

THE TONY BARTLETT MILE

The Avon Valley Mile was first held in 2006 as part of a Sport Relief and takes place over a measured mile course. Tony Bartlett was a long standing member of AVR who sadly passed away in 2014.

As he always supported AVR events and encouraged athletes of all abilities, the Avon Valley Mile was renamed to the Tony Bartlett Mile in his memory.

STAN FARR 5K

Named after the founding father of the club and long serving Secretary, the late Stan Farr, this fun members-only club event takes place each year on Boxing Day (26th December). Starting from Trowbridge Rugby Club, this route is multi-terrain with only a short section of road.

www.avonvalleyrunners.org.uk





CLUB CHAMPIONSHIP

Every year, AVR holds its own Club Championship. The Club Championship is based on the cumulative total of a runner's best 5k, 10K & Half Marathon times achieved within the given year (these must all be certified road races).

If you have completed all three of these distances in the given year, you are eligible to enter your best three times into the championship competition. Entry into this is **not** automatic, and you must submit your times yourself when prompted by the club. The deadline for entry into the club championship is 31st December, each year.

Awards are given to the lead runner in the Senior, V40, V50 & V60 categories, both male and female.

WAVA LEAGUE

The club also runs a WAVA Performance competition each year, for which you can enter with any certified road race between 5k and a marathon distance. WAVA is a formula produced by the World Athletics Veterans Association which allows the performance of athletes in different age categories to be compared to each other. You can use an online calculator to find out your WAVA score.

Age-graded performance level: 100% = Approximate World-Record Level
Over 90% = World Class
Over 80% = National Class
Over 70% = Regional Class
Over 60% = Local Class

Don't Forget!

Every year AVR hosts an annual Presentation Night. This is a social, celebratory event packed full of awards for achievements from the previous year.

WILTSHIRE RACE LEAGUES

Each year the club participates in both the Wiltshire Road and Off-Road Race Leagues.



ROAD RACE LEAGUE

Every year the Wiltshire Athletic Association (of which AVR is a member) select 8 road races for inclusion in the Wiltshire Road Race League (WRRL). Of these, the times of your best 6 races will count towards the overall championship.

Entry into WRRL automatically includes you in the annual AVR Road Race League (as this is usually made up of the same fixtures). You effectively participate in both leagues with each event, however you must be wearing a club vest or t-shirt during the event for the points to count towards AVR in the WRRL.



OFF-ROAD LEAGUE

Similar to the WRRL, the Wiltshire Off-Road Race League (WORRL) is made up of a series of 8 events (off-road/trail) held between October and March each year. Of these, the times of your best 6 races will count towards the overall championship.

In both Wiltshire leagues there are standings for both teams and individuals. To win as a club, we need the largest turnout as possible for each event. Every AVR member that runs, no matter where they place, will earn points for the club!

COMMITTEE ROLES



Club Chair

chairman@avonvalleyrunners.org.uk

The Chair is the lead ambassador for AVR, supporting with the efficient running of the club, helping other committee members understand their responsibilities and representing the club in different ways such as at local and regional events.

Vice Chair

The role of the Vice Chair is to support the Chair with their responsibilities and will cover for the Chair if unable to attend meetings and/or events.

Treasurer

treasurer@avonvalleyrunners.org.uk

The Treasurer manages the income and expenditure in accordance with club rules. They are required to keep up to date financial records, process invoices and bills and regularly report back to the committee on all financial matters.

AVR Youth Secretary

juniors@avonvalleyrunners.org.uk

The AVR Youth Secretary deals with the Junior section of the club in terms of membership requests and queries, organising regular coaching sessions, maintaining records of members and being the main point of contact for all AVR Youth members.

Club Secretary

secretary@avonvalleyrunners.org.uk

The Secretary is the first point of contact for all club enquiries and ensures that any issues and concerns are dealt with appropriately. They also have an active role in supporting club events, committee meetings and dealing with all club-wide communications.

Assistant Secretary

The Assistant Secretary is there to support the Club Secretary with their responsibilities such as club-wide communications, events and meetings, and act as another point of contact for club enquiries.

Membership Secretary

membership@avonvalleyrunners.org.uk

The Membership Secretary deals with all club membership matters, such as collecting club subscriptions annually, maintaining a database of members and dealing with EA membership applications and queries.

Safeguarding Lead

The Safeguarding Lead works to ensure safeguarding is at the heart of the club ethos and that all committee members, run leaders and coaches know how to recognise and respond to potential concerns. They are a source of support and advice for all members in the club.

COMMITTEE ROLES



Road Race Secretary

road@avonvalleyrunners.org.uk

The Road Race Secretary's role is to promote club members' participation in the Wiltshire Road Race League events, along with other local road races, throughout the year.

AVT Secretary

avt@avonvalleyrunners.org.uk

The AVT Secretary is the advocate for multi-sport, ensuring all members are informed of training arrangements and multi-sport fixtures. They are the main point of contact for any enquiries on multi-sport.

Marketing Secretary

news@avonvalleyrunners.org.uk

The Marketing Secretary co-ordinates and monitors social media posts for the club on all media outlets, as well as liaising with other volunteers who may help run different platforms. They compile posts for both club members and the wider community about AVR events.

Minutes Secretary

The role of the Minutes Secretary is to minute monthly committee meetings and the AGM.

Off Road Secretary

offroad@avonvalleyrunners.org.uk

The Off Road Secretary's role is to promote club members' participation in the Wiltshire Off Road Race League events, along with other local off road races, throughout the year.

Kit Manager

kit@avonvalleyrunners.org.uk

The Kit Manager is responsible for all of the club-held AVR training kit, including dealing with enquiries from members, managing sales and regularly providing stock updates for the committee.

Committee Members

The committee members attend monthly committee meetings and bring issues that have been raised by club members. They must make decisions as a collective group and ensure decisions are made in the best interest of the club and its members.

Don't Forget!

AVR also has two appointed **Welfare Officers** to act as the first point of contact for members/volunteers, where a concern about a person's welfare, poor practice or abuse is identified. They will implement the correct reporting and recording procedures and represent welfare on the committee. You can contact them on welfare@avonvalleyrunners.org.uk

GOAL GETTERS

WHAT IS GOAL GETTERS?

The Goal Getters programme was established in 2020 and runs between January and December each year. It is an excellent opportunity to engage with the wider club and work with other members to achieve your personal goals throughout each year.

The programme is currently offered in two parts: "Me vs. Me" and "Goal Getters Challenge".



GOAL GETTERS CHALLENGE

This part is a non-time-based challenge that allows you to take part in a variety of AVR and AVT activities, as well as activities in the wider running community, to earn points. Each year, a set list of agreed activities is decided by the Goal Getters working group and shared with members to complete before 31st December. These include things such as taking part in open and closed AVR races, volunteering at events and attending club social events.

The amount of activities that you complete will determine if you are awarded a Bronze, Silver or Gold award.

15 activities = Bronze

20 activities = Silver

25 = Gold

ME VS. ME

This part sets you time-based goals to achieve during the year, competing against yourself and beating your times from the previous year. You can choose to compete against your race times from three of the following distances: 5km, 5 Mile, 10km, 10 Mile, Half Marathon or Marathon to achieve a Bronze, Silver, or Gold award. Only certified road races can count towards this challenge.

Awards are decided as follows:

Improvement in 1 nominated distance = Bronze

Improvement in 2 nominated distances = Silver

Improvement in all three nominated distances = Gold

VOLUNTEERING WITH AVR

Volunteers are an integral part of the club.

MARSHALLING AND EVENT SUPPORT

Many of the annual AVR organised running events rely on high number of volunteers to ensure they can run safely and successfully year after year. This includes marshals out on the course, volunteers supporting on registration and all of those working behind the scenes in the build up to race day.

Volunteers are an integral part of all of these events, and without them the events could not run.

WORKING GROUPS

Within AVR there are around 10 working groups that members can choose to get involved with. All of these working groups support the club in different ways, from organising events and races, to helping different branches of the club run efficiently. Contact the committee for more information on what groups are available and how to join.

EXTERNAL EVENTS

Not only is there opportunity to support AVR led events, but many external race providers are often looking for volunteers for local events (and often offering a free place at a future event as a thank you!). Plus, the local parkrun events are on the lookout for helpers each week. These are great ways to meet members of the wider running community, and can be great fun!

“Volunteering for AVR is always a lot of fun and is a great way to meet members from across the club. It always feels rewarding knowing that you have played a key role in supporting a club event - and cheered on fellow runners!”

- Vicky Bodman, member since 2017

www.avonvalleyrunners.org.uk

Did You Know?

It takes over 100 volunteers on the day to ensure that The AVR Wiltshire Half Marathon can take place each year!



WHAT DO OUR MEMBERS THINK?

"Being part of AVR has given me so many new and positive experiences. AVR members and volunteers are always so encouraging with many of the club's coaches being invested in the personal achievements of others! From attending speed sessions on the track to bumping into friends at race events, and going on day trips in the minibus to volunteering at our own events, everything you do is always appreciated and personally rewarding. The social parties are always a good laugh too!"

- Sarah Emery, member since 2015.



"Signing up to AVR Couch to 5k was a great decision, Jay and the team were so supportive and the progress we all made was amazing in just 12 weeks. Being part of a team at a similar level and having to be accountable by turning up every week gave me the incentive I needed as I do not enjoy running on my own. It was a great achievement to get to 5km and I feel much fitter as well."

- Sarah Collins, Beginners Course 2023.



"What I particularly love about AVR is how it has something for everyone; supporting, developing and inspiring those who want to improve their running, from the racing snakes through to those simply looking to get a little fitter. The brilliance and dedication of our coaches, run leaders and working groups is truly amazing."

- Tim Burrell, member since 2017.



"With being new to the Wiltshire area, joining AVR allowed me to meet many likeminded people with a shared passion - and for that I am very grateful! I have made many friends through both running and volunteering with the club, and training with others is always a much more enjoyable and motivating experience. Thanks to the variety of sessions on offer, my running performance has greatly improved and I enjoy seeing friendly faces whenever I attend a local running event."

- Katie Oliver, member since 2020.





www.avonvalleyrunners.org.uk

