

THE FELL RUNNERS ASSOCIATION LTD

WELFARE POLICIES

The Fell Runners Association (FRA) welfare policy has been established to ensure that all competitors in FRA promoted events should be able to participate safely, taking into account the inherent hazards of fell running. All runners should be protected from negligence, prejudice and abuse, be it physical, sexual or emotional.

This Policy has been developed in accordance with the UK Athletics “Welfare, Compliance and Safeguarding” documentation (britishathletics.org.uk/governance/welfare-and-safeguarding).

The document comprises:

- The FRA’s principles for welfare
- A statement of the role of the FRA Committee in welfare matters
- Codes of conduct for relevant groups to guide good practice
- References
- Appendices.
 - i) Incident Report Form.
 - ii) Photograph Policy
 - iii) Transgender Policy
 - iv) Anti-Doping Policy

PRINCIPLES

The key principles of this policy are as follows.

- All fell runners whatever their age, culture, ability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse.
- Anyone under the age of 18 years is considered as a child for the purposes of the policy. They will be referred to as a child from the perspective of parents and child protection, and as a junior from the perspective of fell running. In all activities and decisions involving juniors **the junior’s welfare is paramount**.
- For anyone involved in allegations of inappropriate behaviour steps must be taken to ensure that they have appropriate personal support available to them during any investigations.
- Clubs, coaches, race organisers and helpers will be provided (via the FRA or UKA) with documentation and support to ensure they are able to implement the policy.
- Adults working in positions of responsibility with all groups should be aware of and always adhere to good practice.
- Working in partnership with juniors and their parents/carers, as well as adults and their appointed advocates, is essential for the protection of the individual.
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly, fairly and appropriately.
- The FRA recognises the statutory responsibility of Children’s Social Services departments to ensure the welfare of children, and it is committed to working with Local Area Child Protection Committees, and, where appropriate, to comply with their procedures.
- Any investigations undertaken under this policy will be fully documented in writing and available for later scrutiny.

ROLE OF THE FRA COMMITTEE

To ensure the effective implementation of this policy the FRA, primarily through the Welfare Officer, the Junior Coordinator and Coaching Coordinator, will work with clubs, race organisers, coaches, helpers and other individuals to promote the welfare of both junior and adult fell runners.

The role of the FRA Welfare Officer on behalf of the Committee is:

- To develop, monitor and review welfare policy, ensuring compliance with UKA welfare policy.
- To ensure the Welfare Officer, Junior Coordinator and junior camp leads are DBS checked every 3 years
- To promote amongst clubs, coaches, race organisers, fell runners and helpers awareness of the policy, of good practice and of the legal framework in this area.
- To encourage and facilitate adherence to the policy and implementation of statutory regulations relating to child protection and other relevant legislation.
- To receive reports on any incidents from clubs or individuals, and to advise on queries. Reports may be submitted using an incident report form (see Appendix 1) or advice may be sought in any reasonable form, including written communication.
- To initiate action on reports when appropriate.
 - The Welfare Officer will act in conjunction with the Disciplinary sub-committee where a disciplinary sanction may be required
 - Action may have to be deferred where the police or other stakeholders are involved in the case, until they have completed their investigations.
 - The Welfare Office will monitor the progress of follow up actions by those involved and will provide on-going support to the relevant organisations whatever the outcome of the investigation.
 - The Welfare Officer will refer incidents on to the UKA Welfare Officer when escalation is required, for example in matters of safeguarding or media interest.

CODES OF CONDUCT

The Codes of Conduct describe good ethical conduct and practice for fell runners and those groups supporting and developing fell running and managing the sport.

FRA, CLUB AND OTHER OFFICIALS, INCLUDING RACE ORGANISERS

You should:

- Consider the well-being and safety of fell runners before the development of performance
- Promote the positive aspects of fell running
- Display consistently high standards of behaviour
- Ensure that all races are appropriate to the age, ability and experience of those taking part
- Implement any recommendations of UKA and EA policies in relation to Juniors; Vulnerable and Disabled athletes. Respond to any indication of abuse by being prepared to instigate rigorous and confidential investigations in relation to any allegations; to ensure that all interested parties are given a fair opportunity to comment; that support is available for any children or adults involved; prepare written documentation of any investigations and check their accuracy with those involved; inform, in writing, all the parties of the outcome of your investigations
- All clubs should adhere to the requirements to have in place appropriately trained and DBS checked welfare officers as set out in the UKA welfare policy. (see references below)
- Respond to any concerns about safeguarding in a manner which does not exceed your voluntary role. The UKA has professional safeguarding officers and all those in a voluntary position should report all safeguarding issues to safeguarding@uka.org.uk for advice and guidance. This does not preclude any need to act to urgently by involving police or social services where appropriate. It is appropriate for Club Welfare officers to report safeguarding concerns on behalf of members, but it remains the responsibility of all involved to ensure that such concerns do not go unreported.
- Maintain confidentiality of any persons involved in incidents or cases, unless disclosure is required or recommended as a result of investigations made

ALL FELL RUNNERS

You should:

- Respect the rights, dignity and worth of every athlete, coach, technical official and others involved in fell running and treat everyone equally
- Treat all others with the same respect and fairness that you wish to receive
- Thank those who help you to participate in fell running
- Respect diversity amongst fell runners. Avoid using racist, misogynistic or homophobic language or other forms of disrespectful language.
- Act with dignity at all times
- Challenge anyone whose behaviour falls below the expected standards of welfare in fell running. (Direct challenge may not be appropriate or wise and if you judge this to be the case then seek advice from officials or club / FRA welfare officers. Please do not turn blind eyes to unacceptable behaviours.)
- Avoid all forms of sexual harassment, including inappropriate comments about another person's physique / appearance, unwanted and unnecessary touching, deliberate intimidation and unwanted sexual advances.
- Avoid destructive behaviour and leave fell running areas as you find them
- Respect the right of other runners not to converse during races if they do not wish to
- Offer to assist another runner if they need help in the case of injury or illness, provided it is safe for you to do so and regardless of how this will impact on your performance in a race.

JUNIORS

You should:

- At a race notify a responsible adult if you have to go somewhere away from other people
- Use safe transport or travel arrangements
- Tell a responsible adult such, as parents, carers or the Club Welfare Officer, as soon as is reasonably possible if anything makes you concerned or uncomfortable or if you suspect a club mate has suffered from misconduct by someone else
- Not respond if someone seeks private information, unrelated to fell running e.g. home life, if questions make you feel uncomfortable, tell a responsible adult.

ADULT FELL RUNNERS WHO CONSIDER THEMSELVES VULNERABLE OR DISABLED

You should:

- Make yourself aware of the various policies that exist for your benefit – See UKA and EA links in the References section below
- Anticipate, in advance, any specific support that you may need in relation to this policy e.g. having personal support available to you in any discussions

PARENTS/CARERS

You should:

- Respect the rights, dignity and worth of every athlete, coach, technical official and others involved in fell running and treat everyone equally
- Consistently promote positive aspects of fell running, such as fair play, and never condone rule violations.
- Be familiar and aware of the people who are coaching or managing your child
- Take an active interest in your child's participation
- Attend training and races whenever possible
- Ensure that your child does not take unnecessary valuable items to training or races
- Know where your child will be and who they are with

- Provide consent to activities, contact details, and relevant medical information when asked to the Race Organiser/Club/Coach/Junior Coordinator,
- Inform your child's Coach or Club Junior Co-ordinator of any illness or disability that needs to be taken into consideration for fell running.
- Provide any necessary medication that your child needs for the duration of any trips
- Report any concerns you have about your child's or any other child's welfare to the Club welfare officer or FRA welfare officer (This does not affect your statutory right to contact your local Children's Social Services or the police if you feel it is necessary).
- Be aware that your attitude and behaviour directly relate to the behaviour of your child and other young athletes.
- Never make assumptions about your child's safety.

COACHES

You should:

- Place the welfare and safety of the fell runner above the development of performance.
- Make sure you are appropriately qualified for activities that you coach and update your licence and education as and when required by UK Athletics (including first aid and DBS certificates). Your certificates should be available to view by those you coach.
- Ensure that activities you direct, coach or guide are appropriate for the age, maturity, experience and ability of the individual fell runner.
- Review your coach training documentation on welfare at intervals, including factors that promote welfare and factors that undermine welfare, and reflect on your own performance in this area as a coach maintaining best practice where possible.
- Respect the rights, dignity and worth of every fell runner and treat everyone equally, regardless of background or ability.
- Clarify with fell runners (and where appropriate their parents or carers) exactly what is expected of them and what runners are entitled to expect from you.
- Develop working relationships with fell runners based on mutual trust and respect
- Encourage and guide fell runners to accept and take responsibility for their own behaviour and performance
- Consistently promote positive aspects of the sport, such as fair play, and never condone rule violations or the use of prohibited or age-inappropriate substances
- Avoid all behaviours that provide a bad example to others (e.g. abusive language, racism, bullying, harassment, physical or sexual abuse)
- Challenge inappropriate behaviour or language by others
- Avoid the development of intimate relationships between yourself and athletes coached by you
- Avoid spending time alone with a junior unless clearly in view of others
- Report any accidental injury, distress or misunderstanding or misinterpretation (including if a junior or vulnerable adult appears to have been sexually aroused by your actions). A brief written report of such incidents should be submitted to the appropriate Welfare Officer as soon as possible and parents/carers notified. An incident report form is available
- Report similarly any suspected misconduct by other coaches or other people involved in fell running.

REFERENCES

UK Athletics – Welfare, compliance and Safeguarding

www.uka.org.uk/governance/safeguarding/

UK Athletics – Club Welfare Officer requirements

<https://www.englandathletics.org/clubhub/collection/the-role-of-a-club-welfare-officer/>

UK Athletics -Transgender Policy

<https://www.englandathletics.org/take-part/transgender-athletes/>

<https://www.uka.org.uk/news/news-and-features/uk-athletics-publishes-principle-statement-on-transgender-eligibility-in-athletics/>

UK Athletics – Anti-Doping Guidance and ‘Clean Athletics’

www.uka.org.uk/clean-athletics

England Athletics – Disability Athletics

www.englandathletics.org/coaching/development/disability-athletics-resources/

APPENDIX 1

JUNIOR AND VULNERABLE ADULT INCIDENT REPORT FORM

(Please use additional sheets if required and attach any evidence if necessary)

	Person reporting the incident	Person recording the incident	
Name			
Role in Fell Running			
Address and telephone number			
Location of incident (if relevant)		Date of incident	
Name of any individual(s) who dealt with the incident at the time.			
Nature of incident and any details relevant to it:			
Signed (Person reporting the incident)		Signed (Welfare Officer or equivalent)	
Date:		Date:	
Action taken as a result of the incident			
Signed (Welfare Officer)			
Date:			

The completed form, which can be downloaded at <https://www.fellrunner.org.uk/articles/documents#welfare> (or an e-mail containing the relevant information), must be submitted to the FRA Welfare Officer (welfare@fellrunner.org.uk) within 7 days of the accident or incident. In many cases it will be necessary also to inform the UKA and the Welfare Officer will advise.

APPENDIX 2

POLICY ON PHOTOGRAPHS and THEIR PUBLICATION

Photographs are important in fell running and have a great deal of positive benefits. The FRA wishes to encourage responsible photography practices so that we can continue to enjoy fell running photography in an increasingly complex online world. Many fell races occur on Open Access land, where restriction of personnel is impossible to enforce or patrol. There is a possibility that people will take photographs of any person competing in a fell race. These could be published, online e.g. Facebook, Instagram or webpages or in publications. It is not illegal to do this unless it causes alarm or distress in which case it may constitute harassment. There is an onus on those taking the photographs to act responsibly and the FRA advises that club Junior Coordinators and club Welfare Officers should read the UKA and NSPCC guidance on photography (links provided below) The NSPCC link includes a template clubs can use for their own policies. The FRA recommends all clubs and especially those with juniors consider having their own stated photography policy with which to educate members. There is a distinction between photographs taken of juniors and those of seniors.

With regard to Juniors good practice recommends:

1. Photographers and Parents should be aware that **both sharing photographs of and naming juniors in photographs** (other than those they have legal guardianship of) on a public website or a print publication should only be done with permission of the athlete and athlete's parents / legal guardian. There can be some discretion here regarding group shots especially when the athletes have posed for and consented to the photograph for example as a post-race memento.
2. In accordance with the UKA child safeguarding policy we do not advocate the taking of photographs, video or other images of children without consent. If the child is under 16, consent must be obtained from a parent / carer. If the child is over 16, it's good practice to inform parents that photographs and/or videos of their child may be used if the child has given consent.
3. Any storage of images juniors is done in a secure fashion with consent of the athlete's parent/guardian.

<https://www.uka.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Photographic-Policy-Guidance-for-Athletics-Clubs-and-Venues.pdf>

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/online-safety/photographing-filming-children#skip-to-content>

Photographers:

Good practice recommends:

1. No photographs should be taken that are liable to cause offence to the athlete or to persons viewing the photograph where it is shared or made public
2. No photographs should be taken of any athlete changing
3. Commercial photographers should carry verifiable identification to state who they are and who they are working for
4. If publishing albums on the internet a disclaimer should be visible allowing pictures to be taken down if unwanted or for child protection purposes

TRANSGENDER POLICY

The FRA upholds and follows the UKA Policy for Transgender Competitors. (See references above).

It should be noted that FRA has a zero-tolerance policy towards all bullying and harassment, including towards all Transgender Athletes. Reports of such incidents will be taken extremely seriously by the Welfare Officer and the FRA Disciplinary Committee.

Also, the FRA will investigate any allegations of athletes attempting to enter a category they are not eligible for in accordance with the UKA Policy. Athletes who are found to enter a category they are not eligible for will be advised and given a warning that if they persist in doing so this may result in a suspension as per UKA policies.

For clarification athletes are eligible to enter the female category only if they were assigned as female at birth. (Athletes who have Differences In Sexual Development, known as DSD, should consult UKA athletics and/or the FRA welfare officer if they need advice regarding their gender category eligibility.)

In practice the FRA advises that female transgender athletes have the following options:

1. Entering the male category.
2. Entering the male/open category where this is provided.
3. Enter as a non-competitive athlete and make it clear to the race organiser they are to be listed as non-competitive in the results.

Race organisers are encouraged to provide a male/open category instead of a male category so that female transgender athletes may legitimately enter this category while not being required to identify as male. Where there are different start times for male and female athletes the FRA suggests that a female transgender athlete wishing to start on the female start line may be allowed to do so at the discretion of the Race Organiser and in this case, they should enter as non-competitive. Race organisers are asked to consult the FRA Welfare officer if they have questions or issues regarding this and are asked to communicate to transgender athletes sensitively and discreetly.

APPENDIX 4

ANTI-DOPING POLICY

The FRA upholds and follows the UKA Anti-Doping Policy (see References above). The FRA does not condone the use of any performance-enhancing drugs by fell runners, unless the treatment is required to treat a medical condition.

The FRA does not at present require anti-doping testing in any Championships or open Fell Races and does not maintain records of therapeutic use exemptions (TUEs). This policy may change at any time.

Fell runners who are in competition in other disciplines (including track and cross-country) should be aware that they may be drug-tested as part of those competitions and should make themselves aware of the likely testing procedures.