

WALTON ATHLETIC CLUB



MEMBERS' AND PARENTS' HANDBOOK

Updated: July 2021

1. WELCOME

Firstly, hello and a very warm welcome to Walton Athletic Club; thank you for choosing to join our friendly community. Below we aim to provide a little information about the club as well as to set out some expectations of athletes (or parents of athletes under 18 years old). Some of it can be a little dry, but it is important – and where possible, we have provided a link to the relevant place on our website (to save you trying to find it yourself). If you have any comments on this handbook, please do let us know by emailing: info@waltonac.co.uk.

We hope you have a wonderful time in our club and that you/your child thrives here. We look forward to getting to know you.

2. ABOUT THE CLUB

Walton Athletic Club was founded in 1942 and is one of Surrey's oldest and most successful athletics clubs including athletes at International and Olympic level. We welcome and support individuals of any standard, each of whom is valued for their effort and achievement towards the club and their own personal goals.

The club has more than 300 members ranging in age from 7 to 70+ years. We provide qualified coaching in all athletic disciplines and participate in different leagues to give appropriate competition for all age groups in Track & Field, Cross Country, Road Running and Sportshall Athletics.

We are very lucky to be based at the new Elmbridge Sports Hub at Waterside Drive in Walton-on-Thames. It includes an eight-lane, all-weather track with floodlighting, full jumps and throws facilities, a spectator stand, recently refitted weights & fitness room, changing facilities, showers and a very nice bar/coffee shop area.

We hope this handbook will help to answer questions you may have regarding our athletics programme, a bit about the club, our philosophy and expectations of athletes and of parents. Please review it carefully and do visit our [website](#) for more information.

You may already know, but Walton AC is organised and operated by volunteers and we encourage you, on joining the club, to also become a volunteer. Please be prepared to get involved and enjoy athletics with us – the club cannot operate without your help!

3. AIMS

Walton AC is a not-for-profit club affiliated to England Athletics, run by volunteers, that promotes athletics for all in Elmbridge and nearby communities.

4. MEMBERSHIP

Depending on the type of membership, subscriptions are either due from 1st January annually, or termly (eg for the Walton AC Academy and Satellite groups). All

membership applications and renewals are now carried out via the club's online process – which you will receive automatically.

5. COACHES

We have a varied coaching team at the club, offering training options including, sprints, middle distance, long distance, jumps, throws and pole vault. Please do have a look at the [coaching section](#) on our website for more information.

6. GROUPS IN THE MAIN CLUB

The club's main groups train between 18:30 and 20:00 on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Some also train at the weekend when the track is available to members on Saturdays (09:00 until 13:00) and Sundays (09:00 until 14:00). These groups accommodate athletes from year 8 to adults and all coaching during club times is provided as part of the annual membership fee.

As a not-for-profit club run by volunteers, we ask all athletes in the main groups (and parents of athletes under the age of 18) to:

- undertake a volunteer role during at least one competition per year by offering at least two dates of availability (experience is not required ☺).
- provide support for coaches and officials to provide a positive and enjoyable experience for all.
- notify coaches and team managers as soon as possible if they/their child is no longer able to participate in a competitive event because of unforeseen circumstances.
- arrive on time to training (and of course, if you're a parent, please do collect on time too).
- please allow enough time to stay and support other Walton AC team members at competitions.
- be respectful of, and have positive and open communication with, coaches, athletes (and opponents ☺), parents and officials.
- refrain from inappropriate language and behaviour.

7. WALTON AC ACADEMY

As a club, we are delighted to be able to offer termly athletics through the Walton AC Academy. UKA (our governing body) recommends that children don't specialise in an event until they are at least in their mid-teens, so we keep these sessions broad and focus on having fun and finding out more about everything that the world of athletics has to offer.

At the time you sign your child up for this, you will be asked if your child wants to compete. If they do, they will be invited to occasional, appropriate competitions. However there is no pressure at this age to do so.

We do not expect parents of these children to volunteer (though it would be wonderful if you could!) as it is a totally different set-up to the main club's groups and the fees are slightly higher and the coaches are paid.

These groups train between 16:45 and 18:50 on Mondays and Wednesdays and accommodate young athletes from year 3 to 7.

8. WALTON AC SATELLITE GROUP

This group is available to those in years 8 to 13 who are on the waiting list to join one of the club's main groups.

Additionally, some people just want to do a bit of athletics to keep fit but don't particularly want to compete. That's absolutely fine and our Satellite Group can cater for this too. It offers a range of activities and athletes are welcome to compete from time-to-time if they wish, but there is no obligation to do so.

Again, as it is a totally different set-up to the main club's groups – the fees are slightly higher and the coaches are paid – we do not expect athletes or parents of athletes in Satellite Group to volunteer.

9. CODES OF CONDUCT

We are very keen that everyone involved with our club fosters a climate of mutual respect for the rights of others. We have developed a set of Codes of Conduct that every athlete (and parent of those under 18) is required to sign-up to when they apply for, or renew, their membership. For ease of reference they can be found here:

[Athletes' Code of Conduct](#)

[Parents'/Carers' Code of Conduct](#)

[Coaches' Code of Conduct](#)

[Club Officials' and Volunteers' Code of Conduct](#)

10. ATTIRE

All athletes, coaches, officials and volunteers should wear proper, appropriate and smart attire (we are in mixed company and age groups) to practices and matches and all athletes must compete in a Walton AC club vest. Lost items are the responsibility of the athlete as, unfortunately, there is no lost property facility at the site.

11. TRACK ETIQUETTE

All athletes are required to follow the club's [track etiquette](#) policy

12. PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES

As a responsible parent/carer you should be aware that:

- you should not go onto the track or in practice areas during training or at matches.
- you should not attempt to coach or instruct athletes during practice sessions or matches; this is the responsibility of the Walton AC coaching staff.
- out-of-town travel will entail additional costs at own expense
- children under 18 must be in the care of a responsible adult
- we encourage and expect you to take an active interest in your child's participation – do liaise with your child's coach and attend competitions

- when you fill in the online application form for your child, it includes all contact details, next of kin details, any health and medical requirements. If any of these change, it is your responsibility to update the club
- you should inform your child's coach of any allergy, illness or disability that needs to be taken into consideration for athletic performance
- you should provide any necessary medication that your child needs for the duration of any trips

13. COMMUNICATIONS OR CONCERNS

We value communication with parents and strive to keep channels open. You will receive communications about the group you/your child is in and invitations to compete where applicable. We will also communicate about social events (if you have given us permission to do so).

In the unlikely event that you have a concern about anything at all, please do have a look at our [Concerns Policy](#).

14. COMPETITIONS

The Club participates in various competitions throughout the year, check [here](#) for upcoming competitions and email the team manager if you are interested in competing.

Finally, we hope you/your child enjoys their time at Walton Athletics Club and look forward to seeing you at training, competitions and some of the social events we organise.