

# Almost Athletes

Welcome to Almost Athletes, Cheltenham's leading (and friendliest) running club. We pride ourselves on being the kind of club that can help and encourage you to get the most out of your running. Whether your interest is running for fun, getting fit, shedding a few pounds or running competitively, we can help you achieve your aims.

Anyone is welcome to come along to our training sessions and run, regardless of age or ability, and you will soon realise that no-one needs to run alone.

Among our members are runners with years of experience of running at all levels, so please don't be shy to ask if you have any particular interest beyond our training runs.

You may have found out about the club via a friend or from our website ([www.almostathletes.co.uk](http://www.almostathletes.co.uk)). Either way, the word is spreading fast that we make no more demands of you than you would make of yourself.

## Who's Who?

The club committee, currently comprises:

- Peter Mitchener (Chair)
- Elzbieta Antosiewicz (Treasurer)
- Michelle Balchin (Membership Secretary)
- Kevin Beamish (Club Secretary)
- Penny Lewis (Minutes Secretary)
- Steve Adams (Route Master)
- Fiona Barnes (Welfare Officer)
- Dave McGrath (Welfare Officer)
- Dave Elliott (Website)
- Steve Taylor (Social Secretary)

You can contact us anytime by email: [almostathletes@hotmail.com](mailto:almostathletes@hotmail.com)

Please remember that at this time you are under no obligation to become a 'paid-up' member of Almost Athletes and you are more than welcome to join in one of our training sessions before you decide to join.

## Training Sessions

We hold regular, well-organised training sessions (and social events) and we would be happy to see you at any of these. Please note that ALL abilities are welcome at all of these sessions. See our website ([www.almostathletes.co.uk](http://www.almostathletes.co.uk)) for the latest information and venues. Except where stated otherwise, all sessions are FREE to members.

**Wednesday evening** is the most popular session. The running starts at 7pm sharp, so you will need to arrive in good time to park and prepare for the run.

The venue for the run is posted on the website, as are all details of club runs and events and the sessions are split into groups, which may include a 2/3 mile walking group. e.g:

- new runners may wish to join the 4 mile group
- you can then progress to the various 5 mile groups
- on occasion there is also a 7 mile group.

**Monday evening** PoW Stadium (admission charge £3) run by CIRF qualified coach James Clay

**Tuesday evening** Hill training session run by CIRF qualified coach Michael Grant.

**Thursday morning** Format and location varies – see website. Typically, invitation to meet for coffee at 10:15am, after your personal run.

**Thursday evening** focuses on improving your speed. Typically along the Honeybourne Line, run by CIRF qualified coaches Fi & Matt Barnes.

**Saturday morning** Off-Road starting at 9:00am from Cleeve Golf Club (quarry car park). Mostly 8 to 10 miles of 'muddy stuff' that finishes in the clubhouse for a mid-morning 'breakfast'. (Please see Almost Athletes Facebook page)

## Membership

Membership costs £30 for a full year and fees are due annually in April. Current members of an EA affiliated club may apply for Second Claim Membership for £14 per year. Membership forms can be obtained from committee members or website.

## Club Merchandise

We actively encourage our members to run in our club colours (even when training). Wearing your club colours when taking part in races or running events means that other members can recognise and support you and it promotes the club to the wider world. Running kit can be purchased (**cash only please**), from [Up & Running, Cheltenham](http://Up & Running, Cheltenham).

Further details from our website [www.almostathletes.co.uk/merchandise.html](http://www.almostathletes.co.uk/merchandise.html)

## Club Events

As a club, we attend many events during the running calendar, often travelling far and wide to take part (as a group) in interesting and unusual races. These trips away are treated as fun and an opportunity to get to know others in the club:

- Race the Train (Tywyn, Wales)
- Tewkesbury and Stroud Half Marathons
- The London Marathon
- The Cotswold Way Relay
- The Sodbury Slog (Chipping Sodbury)
- The Bugatti Race (Gretton)
- The Christmas Cracker (Weston)
- Marathons or half-marathons in various European cities

We also organise:

- Linda Franks Run - a 5 mile race in memory of a founder member of the club
- Meteor Mile – 1 mile dash at Staverton Airport
- The Bugatti – 10k road race (with Cheltenham Harriers)

## Social Scene

It's not all running! We know that the social side of the club is one of the keys to our success. Over the years, we have established good friendships within the membership that extend beyond the running. There are good attendances at weddings, birthday parties and get-togethers, and the club organises many social events throughout the year, including:

- Good Friday walk on Cleeve Hill
- Club barbecue
- European City Breaks
- Club Christmas Meal & Awards Evening
- Club Annual General Meeting
- Club Quiz

And of course, we all meet at a pub after our run on Wednesday evening and many of us stay for a post-run chat (and the odd beer!).