



**Marathon trail run**  
**Half Marathon trail run**  
**10K trail run**  
**Date: 15<sup>th</sup> September 2019**



Dear 2019 Challenger,

Please find below your **pre-race instructions** for the first ever '**5 Rivers Challenge**' trail run!

Thank you for your entry! Mark, Colin and the team are delighted that so many of you have signed up to take part and we hope you enjoy this new addition to the running calendar!

For those of you unfamiliar with narrative trail run events, your Challenge is simple.... You must self-navigate yourself around an off-road course armed with a written course description, helped by a map, your wits, a sense of adventure, and maybe a friend or two with a sense of direction (if you forgot to pack your own!). For those of you who own a GPS watch, there are GPX files available on the website, available to download onto your device.

Along the route of the course, you will pass through checkpoints manned by our lovely friendly volunteers, there to provide you with food and drink to keep you going through the event. Please say thanks when you see them – they are kindly volunteering their time to help you!

## Directions to Race HQ

All events start and finish at Race HQ: **Allenburys Sports & Social Club, Harriss' Lane, Ware, Hertfordshire SG12 0DJ** (see below for directions). <https://goo.gl/maps/nSHvjkaogbKPPR4YA>

### Walking and Cycling

GSK Ware is easily accessible on foot or by bicycle. Access by foot to GSK Ware is good footpaths from the transport interchanges and there is an alternative scenic route along the River Lea towpath. The National Cycle Network (NCN) Route 61 runs along the River Lea towpath adjacent to the GSK Ware site and Allenburys SSC. It provides an attractive off-road scenic route from Hertford and Welwyn Garden City (via the Cole Green Way) to the north and west, and Stanstead Abbots, Rye House, Cheshunt and beyond to the south. Everyone travelling to GSK Ware by bicycle can park on site.

### Train

Ware is the nearest national rail station to Allenburys SSC. Allow 15-20 min for the walk (0.8 mile) from the station to the club.

Directions from Ware Station to Allenburys SSC: <https://goo.gl/maps/92mf2bbpoGJVzJzdA>

Abellio Greater Anglia trains provide a regular 30-minute service from London, Liverpool Street, to Hertford East via Tottenham Hale or Seven Sisters and Broxbourne. Oyster cards can now be used at Ware and Hertford East station resulting in possible savings on local fares. Connections are available at Tottenham Hale and Seven Sisters for the London Underground (Victoria Line) and at Broxbourne for National Express East Anglia services to Harlow, Bishops Stortford and Cambridge.

For information on train fares and services go to the [National Rail Enquires](#) website

### Bus

There are no direct bus routes to Allenburys SSC. There are bus stops within short walking distance, which are served by local services from Puckeridge, Buntingford, Dane End, Stevenage and Hertford. Other bus services in Ware stop at the area around Ware rail station and Hertford Regional College, which is a 15-minute walk away along the scenic River Lea.

Details of routes can be accessed directly from providers websites: Arriva, Centrebus, Greenline

## Car

From the A1 (north or south) take junction 7 and follow the A602 to Ware until you cross the A10 and take the B1001 towards Ware.

From the A10, take the exit marked Ware B1001/Stevenage A602 and take the B1001 towards Ware, continue past the cemetery and down the hill, past Fanshawe Crescent to the roundabout with Park Road, turn right here until you reach Park Road, then take the second turn left into Harriss' Lane (at a traffic calming raised table) and continue driving between the two sites. Allenburys car park is located on the right-hand corner of the road, immediately before the road turns sharp left onto Priory Street.

## Lift share

We encourage entrants arriving by car to arrange LiftShare, if possible to cut down on the environmental impact of your travel. Visitors are encouraged to visit the Liftshare website, the national journey matching service.

## Parking

There will be ample free car parking space at Race HQ. On arrival at Race HQ, please follow marshal's directions to an available parking space.

## Registration & Race Numbers

Registration will be open from 07:30am. Please aim to arrive at least 30-40 minutes before your allocated start time, to allow enough time for registration and getting yourself ready to run.

Race numbers are pre-allocated and will be available to collect before your event from Race HQ.

You will be asked to write the full name and contact number of someone to contact, in case of emergency on the back of your race number, by our registration team – this is for your own safety!

Your race number is colour-coded according to the distance you are undertaking. The colour coding will help the marshals and race officials identify which distance you are running:

- Red: Marathon (1-100)
- Yellow: Half Marathon (200-300)
- Blue: 10K (300-400)

Please register your number and time at the finish with our finish marshals.

## Race Distance Transfers

It will be possible to transfer between events (either up or down in distance) on the day – please head directly to the Information Desk at Race HQ to do this. Please do not queue up in line for your existing choice of distance. You may also transfer your entry into someone else's name if you are unable to take part for whatever reason – all we will need to see is an email from the registered entrant to confirm they are happy for their place to be transferred over to the nominated person. We will then take the details of the new entrant on the day before issuing the number. We strongly discourage anyone from running in someone else's name or number without informing us of the change first – especially in the event of medical emergency. Any queries on transfers can be emailed to [thegraces@ntlworld.com](mailto:thegraces@ntlworld.com) before the event.

## On the day entries

Online entries will close on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> September (in case you have friends or family interested in joining you!) Note that there will be places available on the day for anyone who has not entered before the closing date. Please head directly to the On-the-day entries/information desk at Race HQ in plenty of time to register before your event.

## Race Day Briefing & Start Times

The course directors will give a short race briefing, starting 10 minutes before each of the three events.

**ALL PARTICIPANTS ARE EXPECTED TO ATTEND THEIR RESPECTIVE BRIEFING!**

### Race Start Times

- 09:00am Marathon\*
- 09:30am Half Marathon
- 10:00am 10K
- 17:00 Cut-off time:

**\*Early start option:** Marathon entrants who expect to take longer than 7 hours may opt for a special early start at 8:00am. If you wish to opt for the early start, please contact the Race Directors: 07769 880809, or email: [thegraces@ntlworld.com](mailto:thegraces@ntlworld.com)

**\*IMPORTANT NOTE for Marathon runners opting for the early 8:00am start:**

- **Checkpoint 1** (at the 5Km point) may not yet be open when you reach it, so please ensure you are carrying adequate hydration to get you to Checkpoint 2!

## Facilities/Services before, during and after your Challenge:

There will be tea, coffee, soft drinks and biscuits available free to registered entrants at Race HQ from 8:00am. There will be a small charge to non-runners and supporters.

From 12:00pm onwards, please feel free to make use of Allenburys fully licenced bar, which serves a good range of beers, wines and soft drinks. There will be hot and cold food available to purchase at reasonable prices from Allenburys

## Bag drop, toilets, changing rooms, lockers & showers

There are changing rooms with toilets and hot showers available in the sports changing rooms (male and female), adjacent to the Race HQ. you are welcome to make use of these facilities.

There are a limited number of secure lockers in the changing rooms. Tokens for the lockers are available at Race HQ – we require £1 deposit for each token, refundable after use.

You are welcome to leave baggage at Race HQ in the designated, unsupervised baggage area but it won't be attended to by the race team, so anything left is done so at your own risk.

## Choice of shoes

The course consists of a mixture of paved surfaces, hard packed and gravel trail, grass tracks, and is suitable for trail shoes - these usually have more grip than road shoes. If the weather is dry, and the ground is not muddy/slippery, road shoes would be fine.

## Courses Directions & Markings

The course consists of 3 non-repeating loops, each of which starts and finishes at Race HQ, and passes by at least one local river. Marathon runners will pass by 5 rivers: Beane, Mimram, Lea, Rib and Ash – hence the '5 Rivers Challenge'!

The 5 Rivers Challenge is a low-key, first-time mostly off-road trail event, in which entrants are expected to follow a narrative description to self-navigate themselves around the course. As such, we do not have marshals to provide directions around the course. However, don't panic... we have road-tested each route several times using runners unfamiliar with the course, and none got lost... so far! For additional guidance:

- The course will be marked using '**arrow**' signs staked out at specific locations where additional direction may be helpful.

- We will also mark the ground with **directional arrows** using bio-degradable **spray paint** the evening before the event,
- We will put out **hazard marker tape** to identify any potential overhead or ground-level safety hazards, such as low-hanging overhead branches, exposed tree roots, or other prominent potential trip hazards!

*We will mention these aspects during race day briefing.*

A full set of printed course directions will be available for you to pick up at the Race HQ, however you can also view, download and print these using the embedded links below, or directly from the website

<https://www.5riverschallenge.com>

There are also three separate GPX files, available to download onto your GPS device, if owned. *Please be sure to download one, two or all three files, depending on your chosen event: 10K, Half Marathon or Marathon*

- **LOOP 1** is run by **all runners: 10K, Half-Marathon and Marathon**. There is 1 refreshment point at the midway point. Link to Loop 1 route directions:  
[https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/444c04\\_c6143abc409544e5b55f4e0d344d218f.docx?dn=Loop%201%206.5%20mile%207th%20Aug%20FINAL.docx](https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/444c04_c6143abc409544e5b55f4e0d344d218f.docx?dn=Loop%201%206.5%20mile%207th%20Aug%20FINAL.docx)

Loop 1 GPX File: <https://connect.garmin.com/modern/course/26793785>

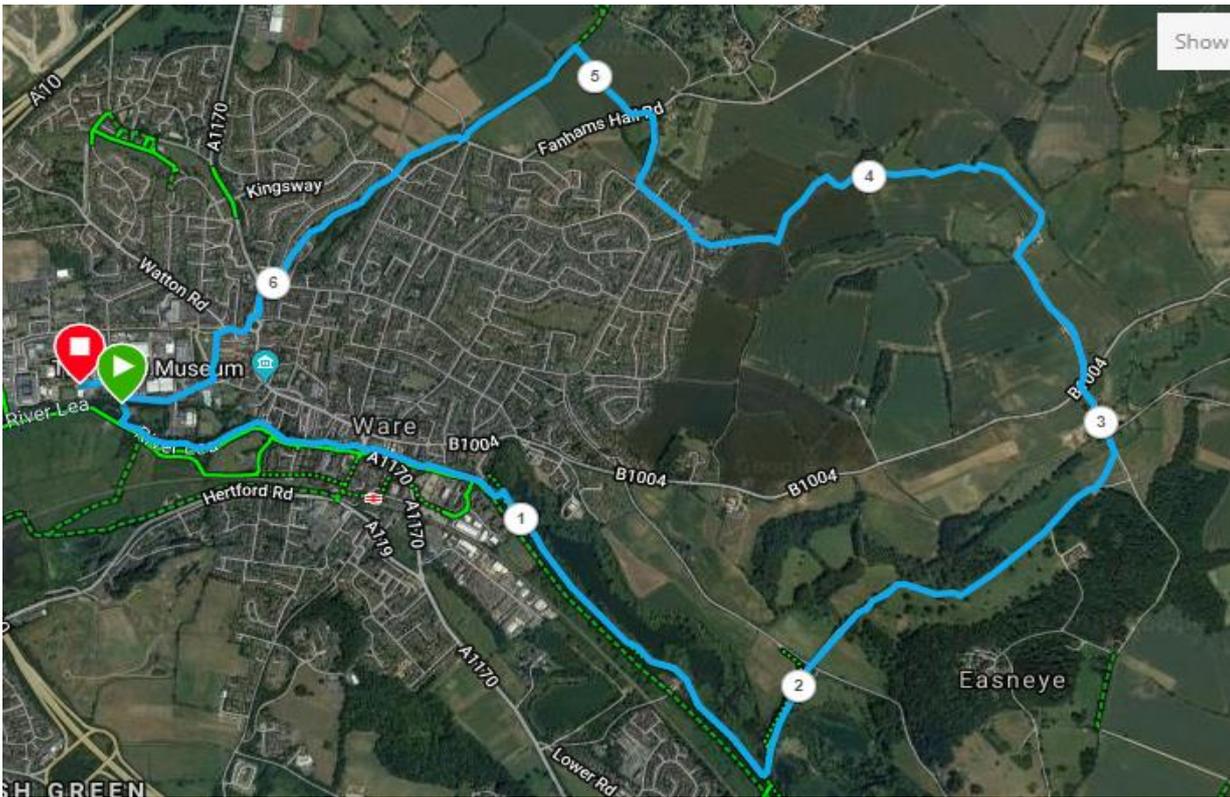
- **LOOP 2** is run by **Half-Marathon and Marathon runners only**. There is 1 refreshment point at the midway point. Link to route directions:  
[https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/444c04\\_aeece234742845a395619d27dc83f887.docx?dn=2nd%20Loop%20River%20Rib%20reformat%20CG%20final-3se](https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/444c04_aeece234742845a395619d27dc83f887.docx?dn=2nd%20Loop%20River%20Rib%20reformat%20CG%20final-3se)

GPX File: <https://connect.garmin.com/modern/course/27680476>

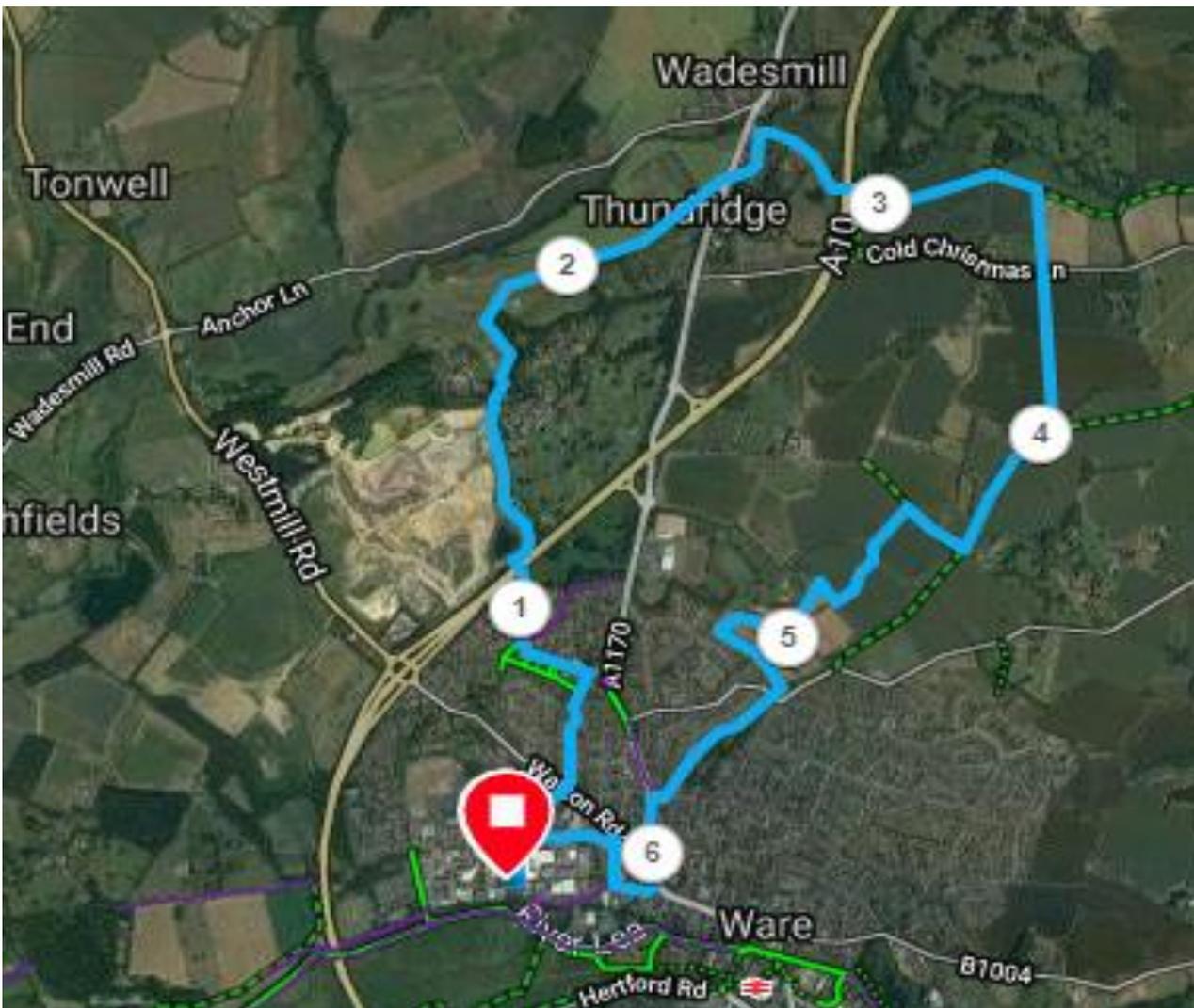
- **LOOP 3** is run by **Marathon runners only**. There are 2 refreshment point approximately one third and two thirds along the route. Link to Loop 2 route directions:  
[https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/444c04\\_4baa381e8bed4256857ea957449c2d11.docx?dn=Loop%203%2010Aug%202019%20FINAL.docx](https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/444c04_4baa381e8bed4256857ea957449c2d11.docx?dn=Loop%203%2010Aug%202019%20FINAL.docx)

Loop 3 GPX File: <https://connect.garmin.com/modern/course/26917218>

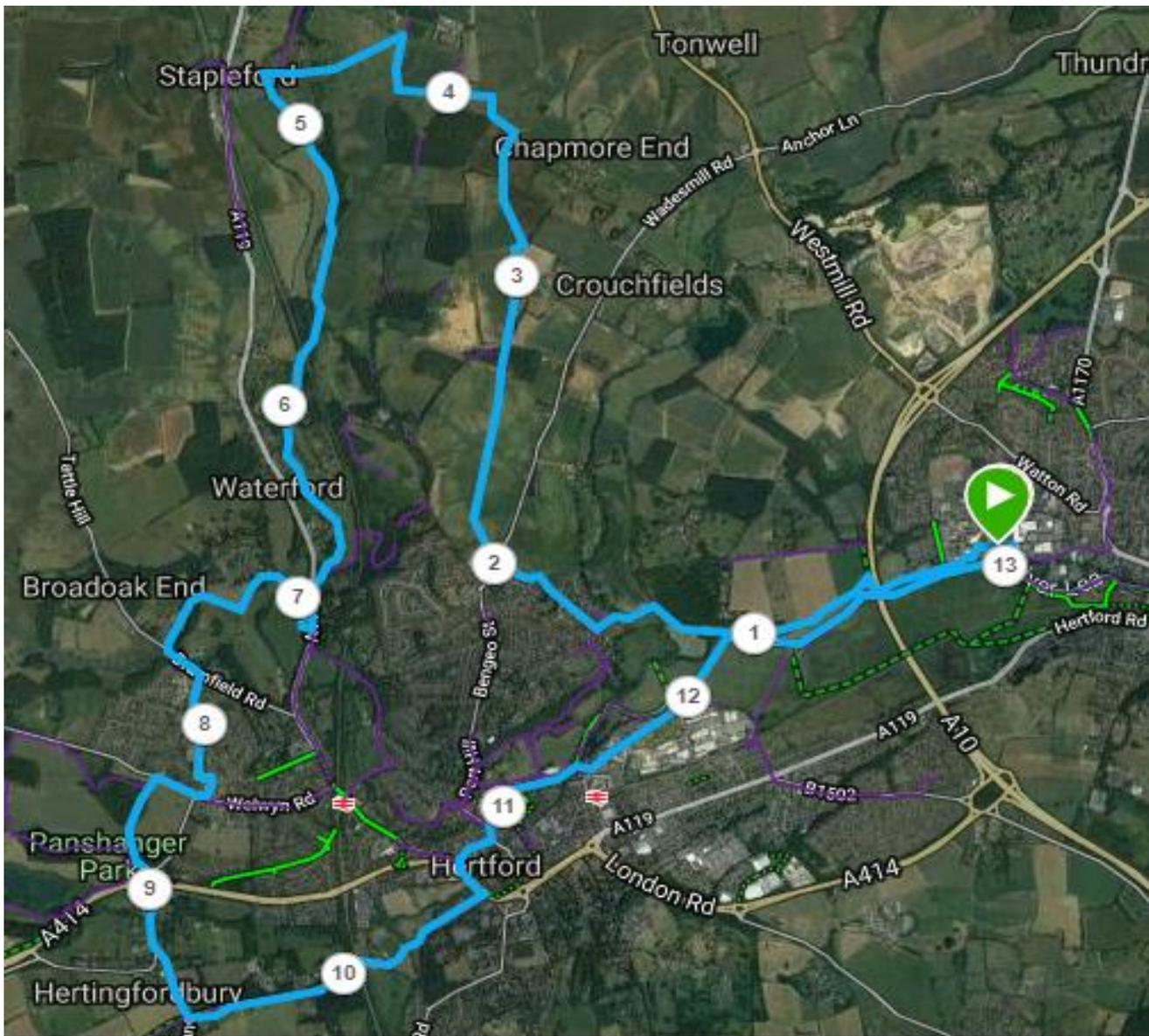
## Loop 1 Route



## Loop 2 Route



## Loop 3 Route



### Dogs

For safety reasons, entrants are forbidden from running with dogs at our event.

### Mobile phones

Ensure that you take a mobile phone – **this is mandatory**. Emergency contact numbers will be provided at registration and printed on the course description. These should be used only in an emergency.

### Litter

Please respect our countryside and neighbourhood.... do not drop any litter, e.g. used gel pouches, bottles, wrappers on the course. Please hold onto used items or leave with the marshals at the checkpoints. ***Anyone found to have breached this rule will be disqualified.***

### Check points

To help minimise the use of cups at checkpoints, ***we strongly encourage you to bring your own water bottle or re-usable cup.***

Water and squash (and cups) will be available at all checkpoints to refill your water bottle. Keep hydrated by taking on fluids early in the day, as dehydration can strike fast on a hot day if you haven't! If the forecast predicts sunshine, we recommend a sun hat and high factor sun cream to apply before and during the challenge; or waterproof clothing if it is forecast to be wet and cold!

## Health & Safety and 'lost on course'!

Your safety is our top priority. If you cannot complete the course, or if you were to get spectacularly lost on the way, help is never too far away. In this case, please call the mobile number printed on the **emergency contacts** signs that will you see in registration and on the course description, and someone will assist – the numbers are **07769 880809 (Colin Grace)** and **07864 572088 (Mark Blanchard)**. **Please ensure that you save these numbers and carry your mobile telephone with you – this is mandatory.**

**For your safety, we highly recommend that all runners download the “What3words” app onto their phones. <https://what3words.com>**

*What3 words* is a really simple way to identify and share your location with friends, race directors and emergency services.

**How does it work?** The developers have assigned each 3m square in the world a unique 3-word address, for example *///trip.table.forks* marks the exact location of the entrance to Allenburys SSC, Ware! These three-word addresses are easy to say and share and are as accurate as GPS coordinates.

**How do I use it?** In case you are lost out in the countryside, the App will indicate the 3-word address of your current location, accurate to within 3 metres, which you can then share by phone call, WhatsApp chat, Messenger etc. Why not give it a try!

The weather forecast for next weekend is currently predicting temperatures in the high teens. However, as we're dealing with the British weather here, this could all change over the next few days! Large parts of the course are open, and you will be exposed to the weather. Packing sun cream, a sun hat and a light waterproof jacket (should the forecast change) and keeping hydrated in the run up to Challenge day is strongly advised.

The course involves several road crossings. For this reason, **the use of over the ear or in-ear headphones is prohibited and runners using such headphones risk disqualification from the event.**

The use of bone-conduction headphones is permitted, though runners using these devices must exercise appropriate caution, especially at road crossings

## "Buddy up"!

Many of you will be running in groups anyway, as sharing the experience is a great way to enjoy the course. In hot conditions we recommend taking part with a “buddy” or group rather than running solo just in case of any difficulties.

Entrants may “drop down” to a shorter distance if you are injured or training hasn't gone well. You can do this by emailing us in advance ([thegraces@ntlworld.com](mailto:thegraces@ntlworld.com)), or on the day at registration.

## First Aid

We will have a trained **First Aider** available at Race HQ. If you feel unwell or sustain an injury during the event please make your way to the nearest checkpoint where assistance will be given, or call the Race Directors, who will arrange support - the numbers are **07769 880809** and **07864 572088**.

## Non-Finishers

Please do not run or walk if you have been unwell or feel unwell on the day. If you become unwell during the Challenge and need to drop out, the best place to do this is at the next or the previous checkpoint. Here you will be

attended to by our friendly checkpoint team, who can discuss the next steps and arrange transport back to Race HQ, if needed.

If you do pull out of the event and make your own way home, please call the phone number provided on your route description to let us know! We need to account for every Challenger that starts any of our courses, so clearly it would be great to see everyone back in safely, or simply that you are safe and well elsewhere!

## Results

This year we will be recording finishing times 'manually' (timing clock/hand recorded) however we will endeavour to publish results as soon as possible, early in the week following the event. Results for our Challenge events will be available on our website: <https://www.5riverschallenge.com>.

If you notice any omissions or amendments, please contact [thegraces@ntlworld.com](mailto:thegraces@ntlworld.com) to let us know.

## And finally...race stash!

And finally...we really hope you enjoy our first event, and appreciate your well-earned **customised race medals** and **technical fibre T-shirts!** These along with your 'goody bag' will be waiting for you to collect at the finish!

We look forward to seeing you on the 15<sup>th</sup> September! If in the meantime you have any questions, feel free to contact us via the website or by email: [thegraces@ntlworld.com](mailto:thegraces@ntlworld.com).

Good luck and best wishes!

**Mark and Colin** and the **5 Rivers Challenge team!**

