

English National Cross-Country Relays October 2020

We very much regret that after significant consultation, planning and discussion, circumstances outside our control have led us to conclude that the English National Cross Country Relays cannot happen as we hoped at the end of October.

Understandably with the current restrictions and rising occurrence of Covid-19 Mansfield District Council have very reluctantly decided that they cannot hold events in their parks and open spaces. They are keen

to find another date when circumstances allow.

We know that many people will be disappointed to hear this news, and that it is likely to add further to existing anxieties and frustrations.

We are very much in a similar situation to parkrun, and we agree with their comments, and we remain committed to holding Cross Country Championship events as soon as circumstances allow and local stakeholders are comfortable.

Since we announced our intention to hold the National Cross Country Relays, things have changed. The Government has introduced new restrictions on social gatherings, local lockdowns are increasingly being implemented in several regions, and we would not be comfortable inviting Clubs to travel around the Country.

There were 92 different Clubs eligible to take part in the reduced format planned and some might not have been able to travel because of the various restrictions around the Country.

Whilst events such as Cross Country are exempt from the six person rule, we feel, at this moment it would be insensitive to push forward with a National event. As we move into the Cross Country season, we believe that Cross Country has an incredibly important role to play in supporting public health. We, like parkrun, strongly believe that, as existing and emerging evidence suggests, and contrary to popular opinion, that there is little or nominal risk of Covid-19 transmission at outdoor physical activity. To date there is little if any evidence of outbreaks directly resulting from participation in outdoor physical activity events. We believe that it is critical that decisions to restrict activities, particularly when there is a demonstrable health benefit, are based on robust evidence.

We fully agree that caution must be observed, and this was built into our event planning, but where evidence is lacking it should be imperative where risk is sufficiently low, activities such as cross country running should be actively supported to return.

Once again we are very sorry that we were unsuccessful at this time, but rest assured we will do what we can to provide National Championships at the earliest opportunity.