



MERCIA FELL RUNNERS

**CHURCH STRETTON: VENUE FOR THE UK ATHLETICS BRITISH HILL & FELL  
RUNNING RELAY CHAMPIONSHIP - 14<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2012**

***Information for visitor economy businesses and community organisations:***

1. *An introduction*
2. *Opportunity & visitor businesses*
3. *Some arrangements*
4. *Mercia Fell Runners and Shropshire hill running*

Mercia Fell Runners is pleased to have been chosen by the Fell Runners Association to host and organise the British Hill & Fell Running Relay Championship in 2012. To prepare for this important event planning has already commenced for the use of the Long Mynd and Church Stretton as its base.

Mercia Fell Runners and the Fell Runners Association are keen to ensure that the local community and its visitor economy has opportunity to realise benefit from the occasion. It is our aim to work with and further develop the goodwill of the local community.

The Relay Championship is the premier team competition in British hill and mountain running and attracts the country's very best racers. The Fell Runners Association (FRA) is hoping to attract 200 teams of 6 runners per team. *(In 2011 Kettlewell in Yorkshire was host to 185 teams drawn from as far as Shettleston in Scotland to Tring in Hertfordshire with many from Cumbria and Yorkshire, N & S Wales)* In addition the numbers of visitors will be swelled by the families and others associated with the teams - not to mention the organising team (approx. 100 personnel) drawn from a number of Shropshire running clubs.

Whereas some clubs may choose to travel to Church Stretton on the morning of the race we expect many to arrive on Saturday or even Friday evening – giving them opportunity to familiarise themselves with the terrain and courses.

The hill and fell running community will be aware of the event location when the annual calendar of races is published in January 2012. In addition web sites concerned with the sport (including the FRA's own official site) and online forums are already making reference to the event.

The event will be reported in specialist publications and local press and media contacts will be alerted nearer to the date of the event. Local press photographers John Corfield and Richard Bishop are expected to be in attendance in addition to a number of specialist race photographers.

***What would you and the business community like to do with this opportunity?***

First and foremost it is hoped that advance knowledge of what will be happening over the weekend of 13/14 October 2012 will be of assistance to local businesses. In addition your business may wish to explore specific ways of engaging:

- **FREE** opportunity to place a simple notice on an event dedicated web page – i.e. essential info; special offers if appropriate – see the made-up example at APPENDIX 1. e.g. but not only: ***accommodation providers; food outlets, restaurants, pubs and cafes; retailers; outdoor recreation services; taxis and transport; visitor attractions;*** plus anything/anyone else wanting to engage with this type of visitor. Contact Charlie Leventon (detail below) in the first instance to reserve an entry.
- Opportunities for sponsorship and advertising, including:
  - prizes
  - printed materials such as the programme and the map
  - banners

.... can be discussed and negotiated – contact Charlie Leventon in the first instance.

Note: the FRA has a long-established relationship with principal sponsor Pete Bland Sports of Kendal (a specialist retailer of hill running kit) which it naturally wishes to respect. This does not necessarily preclude the involvement of other outdoor kit suppliers.

All communication between organiser and competitors/visitors is managed online – printed materials are not sent to them through the post.

The FRA official magazine The Fellrunner is published three times a year. Enquiries about advertising copy and rates can be directed to Michael McLoughlin on 07977 439060 or email [michael.mcloughlin@conlonconstruct.co.uk](mailto:michael.mcloughlin@conlonconstruct.co.uk)

Other ideas for involvement can, of course, be considered. Contacts: The two key people through whom the respective parties are working towards the success of the UKA Hill & Fell Relays 2012 for the visitor economy, are:

- For Church Stretton Area Tourism Group
  - Alan Garner (Chair) E: [info@secrethillswalking.co.uk](mailto:info@secrethillswalking.co.uk) T: 01694 723600
- For Mercia Fell Runners
  - Charlie Leventon E: [charles.leventon@btinternet.com](mailto:charles.leventon@btinternet.com) T: 01743 289946

***A few notes about the practical arrangements for the day:***

Mercia Fell Runners have committed their resources on a wholly voluntary basis to stage this event. Planning and preparation is underway with the cooperation assured of Shropshire County Council (Countryside Ranger, Lynne Dean), the National Trust and the 2<sup>nd</sup> Long Mynd Scouts.

The assembly area will be in Rectory Field – this is where runners and spectators will gather for the finish of each leg and with runners leaving via the 100 steps and returning via Townbrook reservoir and the top paths of Rectory Wood.

Racing starts at 10:00 am - with a spectacular mass start at a location in Town (subject to arrangements with the Police).

Presentations will be made to winning teams in Rectory Field at approx. 3:00 pm.

No charge for spectators.

Local service Space Mobiles of Stanton Lacey have been booked to supply mobile toilets.

As part of their team entry fee runners will be provided with some food on completing their race for which the services of a commercial caterer. In addition it is hoped that a local community organisation might also be engaged to offer refreshments (i.e. tea and cakes) for sale to all-comers.

Special parking has been arranged for competitors in the farm fields to the rear of the Secondary School.

**About Mercia Fell Runners and Shropshire hill running**

**Mercia Fell Runners** (est. 25 years) have a long track record in organising hill races in Shropshire. Each year the Club puts on a dozen races from the popular but gruelling 10 mile Long Mynd Valleys race in February to shorter summer evening races such as the Batch Bash from All Stretton. In addition the Club supports and assists with other races such as the Caradoc Classic in May and the Stretton Skyline in September both organised by Telford AC.

Mercia Fell Runners has more than 200 members making it one of the more significant hill & fell running clubs in the country. In 2010 club member Tim Davies from Forden became the British Fell & Hill Running Champion and in 2011 club member Mel Price of Woolston took 2<sup>nd</sup> place in the women's British championship.

Together with the efforts of the Long Mynd Hike Committee, The Marches section of the Long Distance Walkers Association, Mercia Fell Runners together with Telford AC and Ludlow Runners have ensured that South Shropshire is now recognised as an important centre for hill racing and endurance events - complementing Church Stretton's reputation as a 'Walkers are Welcome Town' and the area's popularity with mountain bikers and aerial sports.

**Quotes:**

*"**High Sports** has been involved with the Shropshire fell running scene for more than 25 years. As an independent retailer our association with the sport as race organisers and sponsors has been an important feature of our local profile."*

Stuart Cathcart; High Sports, Shrewsbury

*"**The Ragleth Inn** has become a favoured venue for local fell runners and is host to a number of races each year. We therefore look forward to adding the FRA Relays to our business calendar for 2012."*

Chris and Wendy Davies; Ragleth Inn

## APPENDIX 1.

A mock-up to illustrate the principle for how information about local businesses and initiatives will be displayed for FREE on the Relays web site for 2012:

- Logo size max. 2 x 1.5 cm
- Text (incl. url) max. 50 words

This does not necessarily represent or reflect the design that will be used for the web page.

Categories may be developed depending on the number and type of entries requested.

<http://merciarelays.org.uk/vistorinfo>

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## WELCOME TO THE SOUTH SHROPSHIRE HILLS, CHURCH STRETTON AND THE LONG MYND

Message from the Town Council: *to be inserted*

	The Church Stretton Town Council website has lots of useful information for the visitor - <a href="http://www.churchstretton.co.uk/">http://www.churchstretton.co.uk/</a>
	<a href="http://www.shropshirehills-buylocal.co.uk">www.shropshirehills-buylocal.co.uk</a> A website to search for local food and drink as well as places where you can eat, stay and enjoy local produce.
	Secret Hills Walking - Guided walking holidays - crafted by walkers for walkers. <a href="http://www.secrethillswalking.co.uk/">http://www.secrethillswalking.co.uk/</a> We offer a range of specialist holidays from Shropshire to Slovenia including 'Strolling and Exploring' and 'Social Walking for Singles'.
	Sunny View Hotel – just 10 miles from Church Stretton - we welcome competitors to our real ale bar and restaurant. Group accommodation available – telephone xxxxxxxx to see if we can meet your requirements. <a href="http://www.fakehotel.co.uk/">http://www.fakehotel.co.uk/</a>
	Take home a souvenir of Church Stretton - find us in the High Street, just 100 metres from Rectory Field. NB <i>Mynd Memories is made up and does not exist.</i>
	Berry's 17 High Street Church Stretton

*Disclaimer: Mercia Fell Runners will not be held responsible for information displayed on this web page it being supplied by the individual businesses represented.*

Web Master: *insert email address*

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