

# TRENTHAM RUNNING CLUB

## Mental Health Ambassador

As we know Running is one of the most accessible and low cost ways to be active and meet government recommendations to be moderately active for at least 150 minutes per week. Whether it's to get fit, improve health, make friends or take on a challenge, running has something to offer everyone.

England Athletics is a signatory of the Mental Health Charter for Sport and Recreation. The Charter sets out how sport can use its collective power to tackle the stigma that surrounds mental health and help people seek support when needed.

Following on from this, England Athletics (EA) and MIND (a UK mental health Charity) have developed a Mental Health Ambassador programme (see link at end). The programme aims to establish a network of volunteer ambassadors in affiliated running clubs and groups across England to support those of us who are experiencing mental health problems. Support includes helping people to start running, get back into running, or continue running as well as to improve the mental wellbeing of their existing members.

TRC now has a Mental Health Ambassador. Phil Thomas, with the support of EA, will work with other members of the club including Committee members and run leaders to proactively support the mental wellbeing of all our members.

These are some of the areas Phil will focus upon:

- Getting people talking about mental health, sharing their experiences and removing stigma.
- Raising awareness of mental health problems.
- Supporting people experiencing mental health problems to not just start running but also maintaining the habit.
- Supporting leaders, coaches and other volunteers with relevant guidance about mental health.

We all benefit from running, both physically and mentally. We all have experienced the way that running can help clear the mind and relieve stress. This is enhanced by our running colleagues sharing problems and experiences with us and giving us support. Sometimes, we are reluctant to ask for help.

Having a Mental Health Ambassador (MHA) in place will encourage people to open up and talk about this often stigmatised subject. Perhaps we can offer moral support to keep members engaged with club activities if they are experiencing tricky times.

If you have any ideas, are interested in becoming an ambassador yourself or would like to discuss an issue confidentially please contact Phil Thomas.

## LINKS / RESOURCES

EA Mental Health Ambassador Program

<http://www.englandathletics.org/mental-health-ambassadors>

Sports Charter

<http://www.sportandrecreation.org.uk/policy/campaigns-initiatives/the-mental-health-charter-for-sport-and-recre>