

# **R and M's RUNS**

## INTRODUCTION

More and more people are making the decision to start a healthier lifestyle, and part of this is including more physical exercise. If this can take in green areas and flowing water then all the better as this can help with mindfulness, and thereby help with mental health. We have devised some routes for you around Alkrington Woods, with the idea that as you become fitter you will be able to exercise for longer and incorporate more cardio into the session. But don't think you have to run these routes: if you have not done any exercise for a while it is best to start off slowly – and by that we mean by walking the routes to begin with and gradually increasing your pace. All the routes start and end at the Gateway, adjacent to Middleton Bus Station. Do consider other users of the paths such as dog-walkers and cyclists and watch out for them. Note that the distances are for guidance only and the red line is the route to follow.

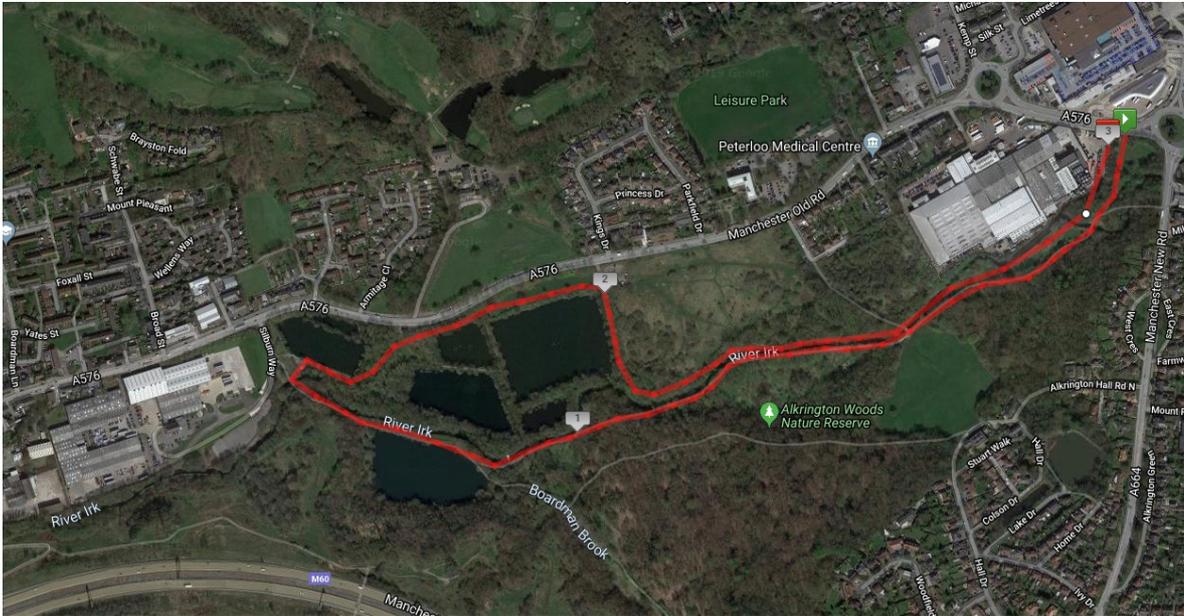
*As with any exercise regime, please consult your doctor if you feel there may be health problems which may impact on the benefits. We recommend comfortable shoes – and trainers are ideal. Note that some of the paths will be muddy at times and there are sections which are uneven.*

### **R's TIPS**

- ✓ Keep it fun: go with a friend and start off at a pace where you can chat.
- ✓ Warm up with a few gentle stretches before you start.
- ✓ Set off slowly, 50-60% of your maximum speed.
- ✓ Check your running technique: don't land on your heels or slap your feet.
- ✓ Use the mantra 'Breathing and shape'. Breathe deeply and slowly and use your arms as pistons.
- ✓ Put on some music to give you a rhythm.
- ✓ Try to time yourself and make a record (see the diary at the end).

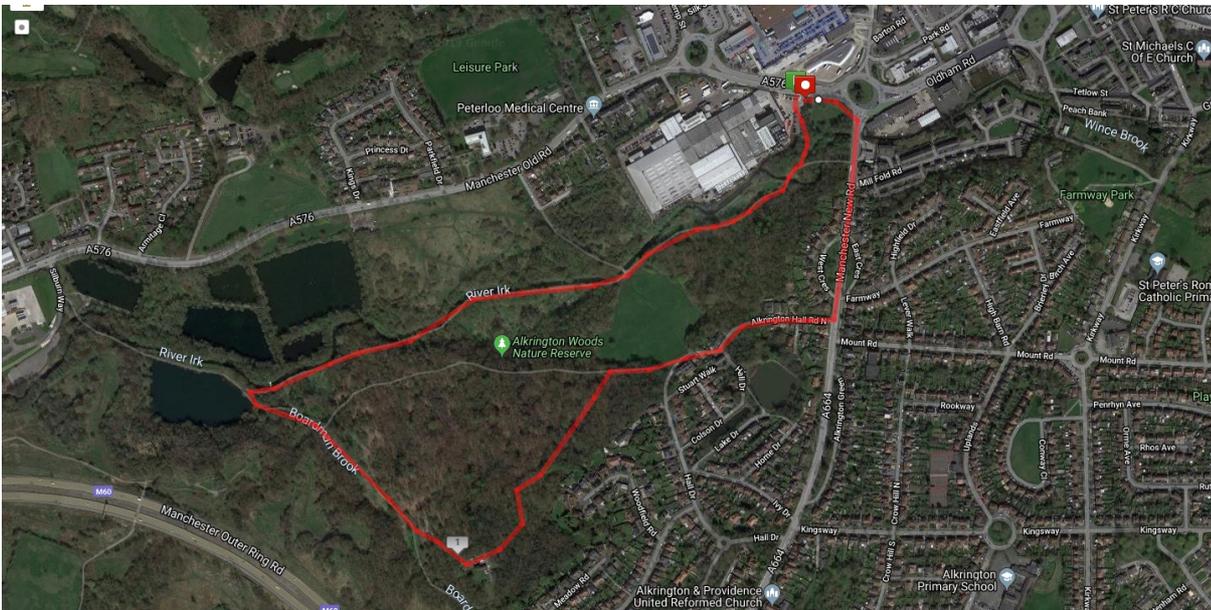
## STARTER - 3 KM. FLAT

This is a good starter as it is all on the flat. If you have never run before, use the old 'scout's pace' technique of walk 20 paces, run 20 paces and so on. You can also use the trees as markers: run to one, walk to another, run to the next, etc.



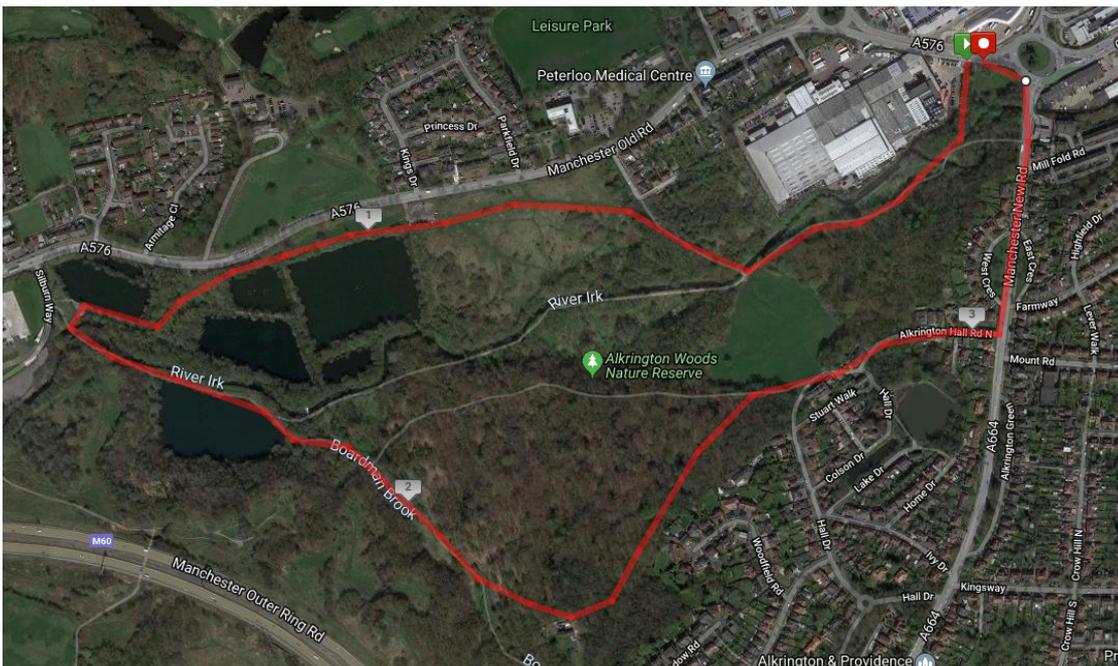
## A HILL START - 3 KM. WITH SOME SLOPES

Do you do this clockwise or anticlockwise? The former gets the hills out of the way at the start. Use small steps for the hills (or power walk to begin with) and USE THOSE ARMS AS PISTONS. Try not to look up – but keep that chest as open as possible to allow as much air into those lungs! At the top try not to stop. Note that this introduces some running on the pavement, along a main road. Keep away from the kerb and watch out for those trip hazards!



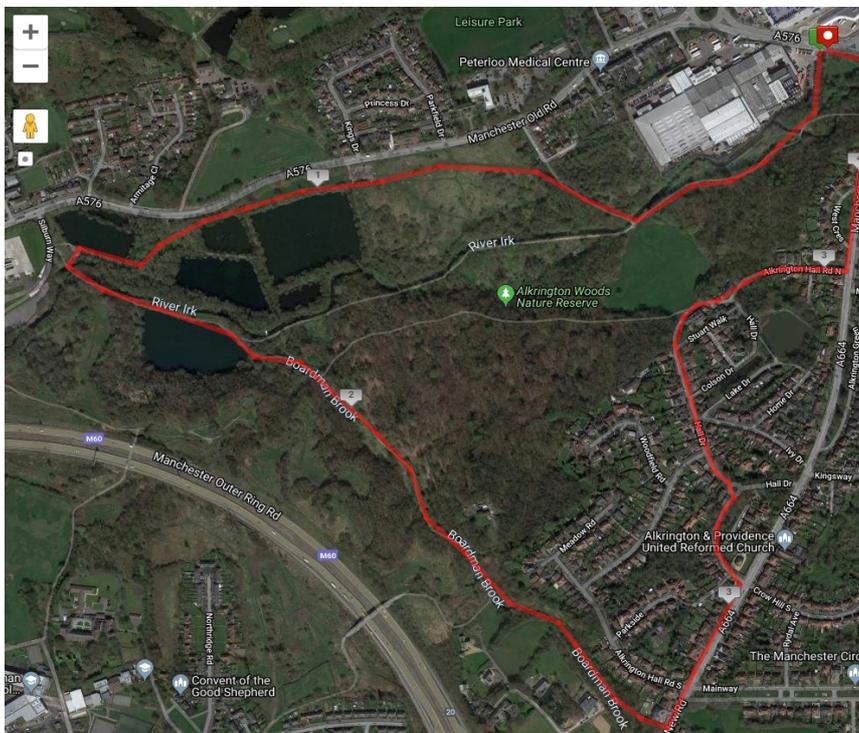
**UP THE DISTANCE - 3.5 KM. WITH SOME SLOPES**

This is going up another gear in that the distance is increased. The strategies remain the same.



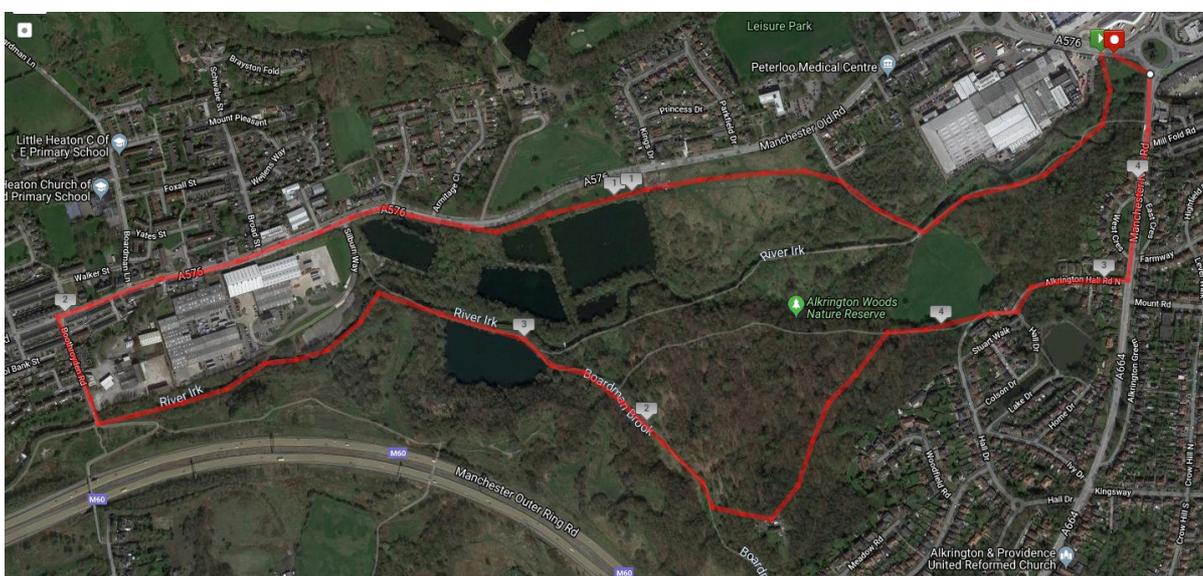
**ADVANCING IT - 4.25 KM. WITH SOME SLOPES AND PAVEMENTS**

This has more pavement running – which is necessary to get in the distance! Again, doing it clockwise gets the hills out of the way at the start.



### THE PEAK - 4.75 KM. SOME SLOPES AND PAVEMENTS

This mostly uses paths you should now be familiar with – but adds an extra loop down the River Irk to increase the distance. By now you should be loving your time in the woods and ready to make up your own routes. But still keep it fun and enjoyable!



### DIARY

This is a good way of showing the improvement you are making. Notice that we have not given any times for the runs. You are in control and you set your own targets.

DATE	RUN	TIME	COMMENT
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