

# Runners for New Life

## Hundreds turn out for the first-ever Greenham Common races to raise

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**GREENHAM Common** was filled with runners, volunteers and spectators at the weekend who came together to take part in the first-ever Greenham Common Half Marathon and 10K Event.

On Sunday morning, 500 runners – including myself and several friends – took to the muddy fields and paths of the historic common land to race against one another and raise vital money for an important local charity.

New Life Special Care Babies – a charitable organisation dedicated to providing neo-natal equipment to special care baby units across the UK – was the organiser of Sunday’s event, which managed to raise £20,000.

This money will form a significant part of the £30,000 cost of a neonatal ventilator which New Life will be buying shortly for the Royal Berkshire Hospital in Reading.

New Life founder and chief executive Trevor Goodall said: “I was blown away by the support and interest for this event, especially as it was the first one.

“The camaraderie and excitement was palpable with all runners and volunteers.

“A special thank you to our volunteers, sponsors, event director Mark Hayes, and the team from Racing Line Running.

“The new ventilator we will buy shortly for Royal Berks is going to make such a difference.”

Rob Jewell was the winner of the half marathon with a blistering time of 1:24.39.

It was only the second half marathon that the 20-year-old had ever completed.

He said: “It was amazing. I



All the runners taking part were raising money for New Life Special Care Babies

honestly wasn’t expecting it. It was a good thing to do and hopefully I will be around next year to do it again.”

George Rossiter was the winner of the 10km race with an impressive time of 38:28.

I took part in the 10km race and with it being my first-ever running event, I thought it was a great experience.

Running around the iconic local landscape of the common and being cheered on by plenty of Newbury people was a fantastic feeling.

I was also super proud of coming 47th with a time of 52:32.

I was hoping to beat 55 minutes so I was over the moon with what I achieved.

Another runner who was proud of their achievements was Emily Watson Stubbs, who completed the 10km race while pushing a buggy containing her one-year-old twins, Rufus and Sylvia.

She was cheered on by her partner Freddie and daughter Edith, and managed to get round with a time of 1:09.34, a mightily impressive effort con-

sidering the conditions.

Ms Watson Stubbs had a personal connection with New Life, and so wanted to take part in the race to support its incredible work.

She said: “We took part in the race because we know how important the New Life charity work is with our own twins and now we know so many other twin and multiple families that have needed extra support in the early stages of their lives.”

Before the race day, I caught up with Trevor Goodall to find out more about his story and the fantastic work New Life does to help hospitals and premature babies up and down the country.

He set up the charity in 1995 after his twin sons Joshua and Samuel died within a week of being born prematurely at the Great Western Hospital in Swindon.

Mr Goodall said: “They were born three months premature.

“It was very unexpected. We were expecting them in September or October and they suddenly appeared in June.

“We were totally unprepared

and it was such a shock.

“Leaving that hospital empty-handed at the end of the week was the worst feeling that anyone could ever have.”

Despite the incredible pain and grief he felt because of the loss of his two sons, Trevor decided to set up a golf day to try to raise some money so he could buy some medical equipment for Great Western.

He said: “I always say that the charity chose me because I would never have dreamt of doing anything like this.

“It was totally out of the blue for me, but I learnt while I was at the hospital that my boys were quite fortunate to have the equipment that they did.

“My boys were too weak and little to survive, but I learnt that many hospitals didn’t have a lot of the equipment they needed so that’s what got me thinking that it would be nice to buy some equipment to help others.”

The first Joshua and Samuel Golf Day at The West Berkshire Golf Club had 120 people take part and £7,300 was raised.



Emily Watson Stubbs completed the 10K race pushing a buggy with her twins in it



New Life founder Trevor Goodall speaking at the starting line  
Picture: Chris Culley

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Rob Jewell, 20, was the winner of the half marathon with a time of 1:24:39  
Picture: Chris Culley



The West Berks Run Together group at the finish line  
Picture: Chris Culley



The 10K runners preparing themselves at the start line



# have a common goal

## money for equipment to support special care baby units across the UK

The day was an emotional one for Trevor and his family, but he decided to make the memorial fundraiser an annual event.

In 2001, the fundraiser was renamed the New Life Golf Day, but it wasn't until 2012 that the charity really took off.

The organisation started to expand when people offered to run the London Marathon for New Life, and the number of fundraising ideas and challenges began to increase.

New Life now organises several events every year with almost all of the proceeds going towards purchasing vital neonatal equipment for special care baby units.

In 2021, the charity reached its £1m fundraising target, and with the total now being at £1.6m, Mr Goodall has already got his eyes on the £2m mark.

He said: "It's gone absolutely mental. I never thought it would be like what I have done in raising £1.6m.

"We've spent half a million at Swindon alone. It is absolutely incredible what we have done.

"I never set out to do this, but something inspired me that day to do it and since then it's just got bigger and bigger and it is just lovely helping little premature lives. It is fantastic."

In 2024, the charity will be organising three golf days, two teams completing the Three



Runners getting themselves registered outside the control tower

Picture: Chris Culley

Peaks Challenge, three cycle rides, a weekend of fundraising at David Lloyd Newbury in May and its gala ball at Newbury Racecourse in November.

Mr Goodall also said to expect more events throughout the year as he "hates saying no" to

anyone that comes to him with a fundraising idea or any hospital that requests some much-needed medical equipment.

To find out more about New Life and all the great work they do, visit <https://www.newlifebabies.org.uk>

Mr Goodall added: "I'm so passionate about it and I am so pleased with what we do.

"It's such a lovely feeling when you buy a piece of equipment that you know babies will use and it will help them survive."



10km race winner George Rossiter crossing the line

Pic: Chris Culley



Joao Carvalho, left, who came 27th in the 10km race with a time of 49:11, alongside Newbury Weekly News reporter Cameron Blackshaw, who came 47th in 52:32

## What's on

### THURSDAY

Rhyme time for toddlers, Wash Common Library, 3pm, free.

### FRIDAY

Wildlife Photographer of the Year 59 exhibition, The Base, Greenham Business Park, open Wed to Sun, 10am to 5pm, plus Tuesday during Easter holidays, £10.95. The world's most prestigious photographic event of its kind celebrates the very best nature photography and photojournalism, using the unique emotive power of photography to inspire wonder and create advocates for the natural world. On loan from the Natural History Museum in London.

World Day of Prayer, St John's Church, Newbury, 10.30am.

Sixties rock concert, The Bacon Arms, Newbury, 8pm, free. Performance by The Rokkits with Richard Summersby on vocals and rhythm guitar, Graham Walker on lead guitar, Gavin Wilkinson on bass and Dave Green on drums.

### SATURDAY

Hungerford Poetry Festival, March 2 to March 16. Organised by Hungerford Library in association with Hungerford Hub, Hungerford Bookshop and Arts for Hungerford, this festival will be a celebration of poetry with a varied programme. Events



The Rokkits will be performing at The Bacon Arms on Friday night

include an exhibition of poetry by local writers, a poetry writing workshop, a town poetry trail, and the opportunity to take part in creating a community poem. There will also be performance poetry with an open mic night and two professional stand-up poetry nights. For more information visit <http://rb.gy/88ab83>

Mayor's charity coffee morning, Town Hall, Newbury, 10am to 12pm. A fundraising event for West Berkshire Homeless.

The Tadley Trust pop-up shop, The Point Youth Centre, Tadley, 1pm to 4pm.

Cash only event featuring refreshments, clothes and toys sale, face painting and tombola.

Jumble sale, Padworth Village Hall, 2pm. In aid of Padworth Village Hall.

St David's Day celebration concert, St Nicolas Church, Newbury, 7pm, £25.

Performance by the South Wales Male Choir with violinist Helen Page and pianist Oliver Williams. Tickets available from the Corn Exchange. Funds raised will be used to support West Berkshire Therapy Centre, Daisy's Dream, Time to Talk and West Berkshire Mencap.

### SUNDAY

Choral evensong, St Mary's Church, Speen, 6pm. Beautiful music followed by refreshments. Everyone is very welcome.

### TUESDAY

West Berkshire Neighbourhood Watch meeting, Waterside Centre, Newbury, 7.15pm. Talks from PCC Matthew Barber, Neil Whiteman of the RBFPS, Insp Matt Gow and Sgt Lizzie McDowell.

Kintbury Wildlife Group meeting, Coronation Hall, Inkpen Road, Kintbury, 7.30pm, £3. KWG Chairman Lesley Staves will present *The Outer Hebrides 2023*, a talk on the birds, wildflowers and landscape of these Scottish islands.

■If you are organising a charity or community event and would like to be included in these free listings, please email details - type of event, time, venue, date and contact - to [report@newburynews.co.uk](mailto:report@newburynews.co.uk)

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