



## Garden City Runners News Release

23 March 2025

### Liverpool Half Marathon

**Daniel Pudner** and **Grace Hickey-Carson** (pictured) ran the Liverpool Half Marathon, and finished in 1:56:02. Daniel writes, "This is a great new PB for Grace and she achieved her target of finishing in under two hours. The route started and finished outside the Liver Building, running past Princes Park and through Sefton Park before dropping down to the coastal path, with a couple of hills on the way."



### Oakley 20

**Rebecca Barden** ran the Oakley 20-mile race today as part of her London Marathon training programme. She writes, "The race is organised by local club Bedford Harriers and is known for its iconic finisher's hoodie which is in a different colour each year. The course starts and finishes in Oakley, taking in an undulating 12-mile loop followed by an 8-mile loop along country roads.



The event is always thoughtfully organised and with great support from marshals and local residents along the course. As ever, I set off too fast but after a couple of miles I settled into a reasonably steady pace, ups and downs notwithstanding, helped along by chats with fellow runners which took my mind off the distance still to run. I even managed to speed up a bit in the final few

miles. I finished in 2:47:14 and was 4th in my age group (V55)." *Rebecca is pictured (right) in the group.*

## **Ashridge Boundary Run**

A number of GCRs took part in the 30km trail race around the boundary of the beautiful Ashridge Estate on Saturday. The challenging route saw them traverse through undulating lush countryside, magnificent woodland and wide open fields, reports **Clare Wildey**.



All GCRs successfully completed the course, with **Steve Ellerd-Elliott** first home for the club in an incredible 2:26:46. Other finishers were: **Mark Westley** (2:45:09); **Russell Casey** (2:54:59); **Paul Gatens** (3:06:43); **Roger Adey** (3:10:14); **Keith McLellan** (3:11:21); **Clare Wildey** (3:11:37); **Andy Morgan** (3:11:41); **Ian Munro** (3:29:14); **Aiden Dwyer** (3:30:03) and **Gareth Askey** (3:32:02).

## **The Dragonfly Run/Ashridge Boundary Run/Big Bling Friday Run**

A mixed bag of events for **Aiden** and **Nadine Dwyer** (*pictured*) last weekend. Reports Nadine, "On Sunday, we were both back on the Thames towpath for *The Dragonfly Run* with Phoenix Running. It was my first run since the Chester 50 miler last weekend. I hadn't been able to run all week thanks to a stinking cold and I still wasn't feeling great on the day. But I didn't want to miss this event and I definitely wanted the spinning Dragonfly medal, so decided to try and grind through it. I managed to run a half-marathon and finally got to test drive my Chester T-shirt.

"For Aiden, this run was the last in a series of three back-to-back events: on Friday, he ran a half marathon in the *Phoenix Big Bling Friday Run*, earning one of the biggest medals we've seen so far. On Saturday, he headed to the Chilterns for 17.5 miles in the *Ashridge Boundary Run* (see above). Instead of medals, each runner received a hat. And then finally on Sunday, it was time to head back to the Thames towpath for a half marathon at the *Dragonfly Run*. An amazing series of events for Aiden to complete."



### **Run Fest at Lee Valley (10k & Half Marathon)**

Lee Valley races along the flattish courses continue to prove popular, and this weekend was no exception.

**Rob Cartwright** returned having smashed his 10k time last year. He writes, "This year I decided to do the Half Marathon, with **Alison** and **Lewis Paterson** kindly driving me to the venue. Allison came home in a new PB of 2:22:26, using the run as preparation for the London Marathon in April.

The course is one lap for the 10k, for the Half a lap around the White Water Centre then back onto the course. I passed **Nick** and **Janet Bream**, with whom I enjoyed a coffee at the end. Nick had a good time for 10k of 59:56 and Janet 1:10:35. I was pleased with a PB time of 1:56:12."

**Chris Baylis** finished in 5<sup>th</sup> place, and first in his age category in a time of 1:16:35. **Andy Gittins** finished in 1:35:07; **Nicholas Summers** 1:38:12; **Ilona Peva** 2:03:55.

First home in the 10K was **Nigel Cavill** (in 46:24), followed by **Michael Grant** (48:20); **Lewis Paterson** (1:03:37); **Robert Wye** (1:07:12) and **Ilona Peva** (2:03:55).

### **Record turn-out of GCR Walkers**

A record number of walkers turned out for the second gathering of the season ... a six-mile loop from Preston, starting and finishing at the Red Lion (with welcome refreshments waiting there at the end). For details of forthcoming walks, email: [jerry@jgp-pr.com](mailto:jerry@jgp-pr.com)

## **parkrun Tourism #1**

On Saturday, three GCR members —**Peter Laphorne, Brian Robbins, and Willow Gibson** (*pictured*)—headed to Great Notley parkrun to take part in a special milestone event: their 500th run!

The scenic, undulating course around Great Notley Country Park made for a brilliant morning out, with plenty of friendly faces and encouraging marshals along the way.



Brian finished in 26:18, Peter in 36:14, and Willow in 41:17—great running all around!

Congratulations to Great Notley parkrun on reaching this incredible milestone!

## **parkrun Tourism #2**

This weekend **Sarah** and **Sid Valentine** (*pictured*) were visiting York and decided to get some parkrun tourism in. Says Sid, "We decided to visit Fountains Abbey parkrun and it didn't disappoint. The course is a two-lapper with stunning views of the Abbey and Royal Studland water garden throughout the run.

He adds, "The route is paved throughout with a bit of a narrow start but is well managed by having pace guides put in place at the start, the course has a moderate elevation too.

"After the race we stopped for coffee then used our National Trust membership for a more leisurely stroll around this wonderful Abbey."

## **parkrun Roundup**

More than 100 GCRs braved the various parkrun courses around this country this weekend, including the above tourist forays. Results that stood out are as follows: **Sean Bowen** ran Rickmansworth in 20:22. At nearby Stevenage **Amber-Leigh Marvin** was first GCR lady home in 22:10, while **Lauren Potter** PB'd in 23:17. Three GCRs broke the 20-minute barrier at Panshanger including **Emily Owen**, first female home in 19:48. Others who turned in commendable performances were **Rob Casserley**, who finished 2<sup>nd</sup> overall in 19:25, and **Graeme McSorley** (19:41). **John McDowall** also recorded an excellent PB, in 20:24, as did **Matthew Renney** in 20:52, and young JM10 runner **Henry Bostock** in an incredible 21:35.

Another GCR who PB'd at Panshanger, as the trails continue to harden, was **Martyn Perrin** (22:26). At Croxteth Hall **Daniel Pudner** finished inside the top ten in a time of 20:07. At Jersey Farm the ever-reliable **Paul Guy** completed the course in 19:02, placing him 5<sup>th</sup> overall. At Henlow **Thomas Buzzard** finished 7<sup>th</sup> in 21:01, while **Jamie Rose** finished 5<sup>th</sup> at Leavesden in 20:24. At the newly mapped Oaklands College parkrun course, which is now providing faster times after its exceedingly muddy start, **James Huish** finished 2<sup>nd</sup> in a speedy 18:11, while **Robin Newby** PB'd in 21:27 and **Joseph Skermer** and **Lee Wood** did likewise in 26:13 and 28:00 respectively. **Alida Preis** was another who took advantage of the faster course, PBing in 32:38. Also showing PBs at the course, which is fast gaining popularity, were **Mick Wise** (36:04) and **Bernadette Newby** (37:09).

Full results for GCRs participating in Saturday's parkruns can be found [here](#).

### **2025 Club Championship**

The Club Championship principally consists of races open to the public, although other races may be included as long as they are not hosted by Garden City Runners. The races are ideally chosen from the Avery calendar; however, Race Committee may express flexibility including prestigious events and those facilitating Hertfordshire County Championships. parkruns may be included and should be local. Runners' top 5 scores to count.

For 2025, the Championship races are:

<b>Race #</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Date</b>
1	Fred Hughes 10	19 <sup>th</sup> Jan
2	Watford Half Marathon	2 <sup>nd</sup> Feb
3	Panshanger Parkrun	8 <sup>th</sup> Mar
4	Hitchin 10k	4 <sup>th</sup> May
5	Fairlands Valley Spartans 3k Relays	end Jul
6	Standalone 10	start Oct
7	Stevenage Half Marathon	end Oct
8	ATW Hatfield 5 miler	end Nov

### **GCR Avery League 2025**

The GCR Race Committee has produced the calendar of races for the Avery League Competition and the Club Championships. Details on all of the 2025 races are below, and these will also be published on the GCR website as soon as possible, and on the GCR Facebook group. Happy Racing!

<b>Avery Event #</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Venue</b>	<b>Cost Approx.</b>	<b>Notes</b>	<b>Status</b>
1	19 <sup>th</sup> Jan	<b>Fred Hughes 10</b>	St Columba's College, St Albans	£22	enter at ATW Herts Seniors	completed
2	2 <sup>nd</sup> Feb	<b>Watford Half Marathon</b>	Cassiobury Park, Watford	£38	Herts Seniors enter at ATW	completed
3	16 <sup>th</sup> Feb	<b>Watford XC, race 5 Sunday League</b>	Cassiobury Park, Watford	free	Club will send out details by email	completed
4 V	8 <sup>th</sup> Mar	<b>Panshanger Parkrun</b>	Panshanger Park	free	see parkrun website	completed
5	6 <sup>th</sup> Apr	<b>St Clare Hospice 10k</b>	Hastingswood, Harlow	£16	<a href="https://stclarehospice.org.uk/event/st-clare-hospice-10k-2024/">https://stclarehospice.org.uk/event/st-clare-hospice-10k-2024/</a>	
6	4 <sup>th</sup> May	<b>Hitchin 10k</b>	Hitchin town centre	£22	Herts Vets tbc enter at Racesonline	
7	Weds 21 <sup>st</sup> May	<b>MWRRL Race 1</b>	Host club St Albans Striders, venue tbc	free	Club will send out details by email	
8	Weds 4 <sup>th</sup> June	<b>MWRRL Race 2</b>	Epping Forest	free	Club will send out details by email	
9	Weds 18 <sup>th</sup> June	<b>MWRRL Race 3</b>	West Herts venue TBD	free	Club will send out details by email	
10 V	22 <sup>nd</sup> Jun	<b>Welwyn 10k at Panshanger Park</b>	Panshanger Park		enter at Racesonline	
11	Weds 2 <sup>nd</sup> July	<b>MWRRL Race 4</b>	North Herts venue TBD	free	Club will send out details by email	
12	6 <sup>th</sup> July	<b>Ware 10s</b>	The Chauncy School, Park Rd, Ware		10k or 10 miler Enter <a href="#">here</a>	
13 V	Weds 9 <sup>th</sup> July	<b>MWRRL Mob Match, WGC</b>	Ridgeway Academy, WGC	free	Club will send out details by email	
14	end Jul	<b>Fairlands Valley Spartans 3k Relays</b>	Fairlands Valley Park, Stevenage	free	Club will send out details by email	
15 V	17 <sup>th</sup> August	<b>20.20k Centenary Run</b>	Stanborough Park South Lake near Hatfield	free	Club will send out details by email	
16 V	10 <sup>th</sup> September	<b>Race 3 of the Hatfield 5k</b>	Affinity Water HQ, Hatfield		enter at <a href="#">Racesonline</a>	
17	start Oct	<b>Standalone 10k</b>	Standalone Farm, Hatfield		Herts Seniors tbc enter at Racesonline	
18	mid Oct	<b>XC, race 1 Sunday League</b>		free	Club will send out details by email	
19	end Oct	<b>Stevenage Half Marathon</b>	Hampson Park, Stevenage		enter at Racesonline	

20	end Oct	<b>XC, race 2 Sunday League</b>		free	Club will send out details by email	
21	start Nov	<b>XC, race 3 Sunday League</b>		free	Club will send out details by email	
22	end Nov	<b>ATW Hatfield 5 miler</b>	Herts University, Hatfield		Herts Vets tbc enter at ATW	
23 V	start-mid Dec	<b>Festive 5</b>	Stanborough Common, WGC		enter at Racesonline	
24	mid Dec	<b>XC, race 4 Sunday League</b>		free	Club will send out details by email	
25	end Dec	<b>Buntingford 10 miler</b>	Freman College, Buntingford		Herts Vets tbc BMAF tbc	

Note: we anticipate there will be 3 XCs held in 2025 to the 2025/6 season but have shown 4 races to reflect 2024

V – Volunteers get an Avery Point

ATW – enter at Active Training World: [https://www.atwevents.co.uk/calendars/sport-events?category\\_page=1&category\\_id=21](https://www.atwevents.co.uk/calendars/sport-events?category_page=1&category_id=21)

Racesonline: <https://www.racesonline.uk/>

#### **Dates of races:**

- Brighton Marathon: 6 April 2025
- Boston Marathon: 21 April 2025
- London Marathon: 27 April 2025
- Manchester Marathon: 27 April 2025

## **Group Runs - Tuesdays 6:20pm for 6:30pm start, Dance Studio Ridgeway Academy**

The group runs are planned to take approximately an hour, the following table gives an idea of the pace. To give variety, especially in the summer, distances will vary a little. Those attending by car are asked to **park in the school car park (Herns Lane)** and not the Sports Centre car park (Appletree Way).

Group/Distance	Pace (mins/km)	Pace (mins/mile)
5k social	A gentle-paced run that would suit those who are still new to running, like a slower pace, are returning from injury or a break from running	
7k	7:30 – 8	12 – 13
8k	7 – 7:30	11 – 12
9k	6:30 – 7	10 – 11
10k	5:45 – 6:15	9 – 10
11k	5 – 5:30	8 – 8:30

## **Hill Reps – Tuesdays Lunchtime**

With XC season in full swing now, **Sid Valentine** and **Dom Thomas** are hosting hill repeat training sessions.

These sessions will be open to all members of the club at all paces and are a good way to improve your overall stamina and performance.

You may require a sports watch or timer but if you have not got either of these do not worry you can still come and join in the fun (please see Sid or Dom for the definition of 'fun').

Please be sure to wear bright clothing and or head torches.

## **Interval Sessions: Tuesdays 6:45pm start, various locations in Welwyn Garden City**

Approximately 25 mins of high intensity intervals over distances from 400m to a mile, with rest periods, in various locations in WGC. Runners of all abilities are welcome, pace is dictated by the runners themselves, slower runners will simply do fewer repetitions.

Members will be notified of the locations and session format on email and Facebook.



## **Group Runs – Thursdays 6:20pm for 6.30pm start, Campus West**

Thursday group run meets at Campus West on the steps outside the library. The What3Words location for the start is for start location: <https://w3w.co/eager.bliss.stuff>. There are usually three groups as follows:

5k social	A gentle-paced run that would suit those who are still new to running, like a slower pace, are returning from injury or a break from running
7-8km	Route to take approximately an hour
9-10km	Route to take approximately an hour
Introduction to intervals	This is often time-based intervals rather than distance

## **Track Intervals – Thursdays 8:00pm Gosling Track**

Meet at the track for 15 minutes of warm up activities followed by approximately 30 minutes of track intervals. Sessions comprise laps or multiple laps of the track followed by rest periods. Runners of all abilities are welcome, runners will be formed into groups based on targeted pace.

**A reminder to GCRs that there are now parking charges at Gosling Sports Park – this page has details of car parking charges:**

<https://www.better.org.uk/leisure-centre/welwyn/gosling-sports-park/gosling-car-parking>

## **Circuit Training - Homerswood School**

For those interested, former GCR member Steve Livingstone runs a very good one-hour circuit training session every **Monday at 6:30pm at Homerswood School**, Kirklands, WGC, AL8 7RF.

The cost is £5 (free for first timers). Five minutes warm up, 40 mins circuits, 15 mins stretching (great for runners). Bring a towel and some water.

## **Club Kit**

Club kit is available from the Club Kit Secretary Richard Somerset.

We have vests, t-shirts, long sleeve tops and jackets in club colours in all sizes. See club website for photos. Vests, t-shirts and long sleeved tops are £21 jackets are £42.

You can pay by cash or bank transfer. Please Facebook message or text Richard on 07790 591868 or email [rich.somerset@ntlworld.com](mailto:rich.somerset@ntlworld.com) to arrange pick-up.

"Puffa" jackets are also available for £42, please contact Martha Hall on: [ma-hall28@hotmail.com](mailto:ma-hall28@hotmail.com) for availability and more details.

### **GCR Strava Group**

If you'd like to join the GCR Strava community, follow this link: <https://www.strava.com/clubs/garden-city-runners>

## **Join Garden City Runners**

Do you live in or near Welwyn Garden City? Like running? Garden City Runners is your local running club. It has over 350 members and encourages participation by all. The club has a varied training programme to suit everyone, from working up to 5 kilometres right through to full marathons. Try a few sessions before joining. Membership is only £20 per year and is available on the GCR website via the new Membermojo platform (note that it is no longer possible to join via the old application form). Simply log into <https://membermojo.co.uk/gcr> and follow the instructions. If you want to know more about the Garden City Runners please contact Michael Scutt (Secretary) or Sue Fletcher (Membership) at [gcr@gardencityrunners.org.uk](mailto:gcr@gardencityrunners.org.uk), visit our website <https://www.gardencityrunners.org.uk/> or our Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/groups/gardencityrunners/](http://www.facebook.com/groups/gardencityrunners/)

*Please send reports of races and milestones, with photos if available, before 7pm Sunday evening for (almost) guaranteed inclusion, to [results@gardencityrunners.org.uk](mailto:results@gardencityrunners.org.uk)*

He adds, "The route is paved throughout with a bit of a narrow start but is well managed by having pace guides put in place at the start, the course has a moderate elevation too.

"After the race we stopped for coffee then used our National Trust membership for a more leisurely stroll around this wonderful Abbey."

*Please send reports of races and milestones, with photos if available, before 7pm Sunday evening for (almost) guaranteed inclusion, to [results@gardencityrunners.org.uk](mailto:results@gardencityrunners.org.uk)*