



## Garden City Runners News Release

**26 January 2025**

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)

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## **GCR Awards Night**

The glittering jewel in the GCR social calendar! The venue has been announced for the GCR Awards Night on Saturday, 15<sup>th</sup> March 2025: Shamrock Club (Ridgeway, AL7 2AD). Social Soph is arranging a fabulous event to recognise and celebrate all the various achievements:

"This event will be held in their private hall/with its own private bar (for our sole use) and not in the bar, with their regulars! (just encase there is any confusion). The drinks are cheap (social club prices). Yayyy!

Our very own talented GCR DJ John will be bring us to the dance floor after the awards so please put your running trainers away for the eve and get your dancing shoes on!

There will be hot food, and I will try to cater for all (will do my best!). Ticket booking, price and food choice will be announced soon. In the meantime, please put the date in your diary.

This event is for all GCRs, and any level so you could be a winner. Come and chat, cheer & dance! It would be lovely to see everyone there."



## Marrakech Marathon

**Martin Mitchell** completed his first official marathon (barring ultras) this morning in Marrakech. Martin reports: "We set off at 8:30am just in time for the sunrise. It was a bit of a free-for-all in the starting pen: apparently, there was supposed to be up to 12000 runners but nowhere near that. I struggled for the first 10k probably down to lack of sleep and the climate change, but I improved in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half and managed to finish strong overtaking a lot of people who seemed to have hit the wall. There was a half marathon taking place at the same time and at one stage I accidentally joined them and had to double back costing me 200m. I managed to finish in a time of 3:05:31. I stayed behind to watch other finishers and was amazed to see a goat with a race bib cross the finish line in the half marathon."



## Phoenix Runificent Run/Phoenix Build Your Bling Run

Double weekender on the Thames towpath for **Nadine and Aidan Dwyer**, as Nadine writes: "Oon Saturday, Aiden and I ran a marathon at the Phoenix Runificent Run. And on Sunday, we returned for a half-marathon at the Build Your Bling Run (aka the Lego run). This was the first ever running event where you got to build your own medal from a specially designed Lego kit. Every runner received the ribbon and a little pouch of Lego pieces with the instructions to build the basic round medal. Then it was down to us to follow the instructions or get a little creative. Aiden stuck to the standard design, and I ended up building a Phoenix shaped medal. Phoenix Running always come up with great medals and this collaboration with Lego is a fun addition to our ever-expanding medal collection."



## **Southern XC Championships**

The Southern XC Championships took place in Beckenham Place Park on Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> January. **Dom Thomas** reports on this, his third consecutive one, noting that they aren't getting any easier. "A bright sunny day; however, plenty of mud on the course churned up by the previous 9 races was energy sapping in parts. Same course as last year - so 1 small lap and 2 large ones - came in a bit short of 15KM advertised. I finished 513/633. Roll on The National at Parliament Hill in a month."



## **Bedford 10-Mile**

**Philippa Thorogood** completed the Bedford 10-Mile race today. Philippa writes:

"My first my first 10 mile race and I completed in 1 hour 58 mins. It was very cold and windy but it is a very well organised race and the atmosphere was great. Very supportive and friendly."

## **Essendon 10K**

**Daniel Follon** ran at Essendon Country Club this morning for their 10k run, reporting: "It was a really nice location, slightly undulating, it's a run through their golf course. I managed to finish 27/186 runners, in a time of 47:44."

## **parkrun roundup**

118 GCRs roused themselves from Saturday slumber to partake of a parkrun. 31 of you were at Panshanger where **Chris Baylis** was 1<sup>st</sup> in a cracking new course PB of 17:43, and **Graeme McSorley** was 7<sup>th</sup> in 19:45. For the ladies, **Rebecca Barden** was 2<sup>nd</sup> in 24:02, **Felicity Wadley** was 7<sup>th</sup> in 26:10, **Clare Wildey** was 8<sup>th</sup> in 26:35, and **Helen Stafford** was 10<sup>th</sup> in 27:21. New course PBs were achieved for **Matthew Renney** in 21:48 and **Danielle Hood** in 31:59.

Top 10 finishers elsewhere were as follows:

- **Jack Tann** was 3<sup>rd</sup> at Hackney Marshes in 18:03
- **Bruce Judge** was 2<sup>nd</sup> at Westmill in 20:43
- **Richard Taylor** was 7<sup>th</sup> at Stevenage in 18:53, where Zoe Stevens was 1<sup>st</sup> lady in 21:44
- **Chris Eland** and **Rob Casserley** were 6<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> at Penrith in 19:38 and 20:10, respectively
- **Barbara Kubis-Labiak** was 1<sup>st</sup> lady at Opole in 25:09
- **Thomas Buzaard** was 9<sup>th</sup> at Great Denham in a new course PB of 18:45, with **Jess Buzzard** as 4<sup>th</sup> lady also with a new course PB 24:46
- **Paul Guy** was 2<sup>nd</sup> at Jersey Farm in 19:38
- **Amber-Leigh Marvin** was 4<sup>th</sup> lady at Babbs Mill in 21:39
- **Jamie Rose** was 6<sup>th</sup> and **Alex Faulkner** was 2<sup>nd</sup> lady at Schoeterbos in 19:11 and 21:53, respectively
- **Sean Bowen** was 3<sup>rd</sup> at Henlow Bridge Lakes in 21:59
- **Katharine Farrell** was 4<sup>th</sup> lady at Belvoir Castle in 26:45
- **Caroline Hale** was 2<sup>nd</sup> lady at **Oaklands College in 24:03**

Other parkrun locations attended by touring GCRs were: Barnstaple, Bedfont Lakes, Blickling, Bromley, Bug Hunter Waters, Gunpowder, Linford Wood, Markeaton, Northala Fields, Oakhill, Osterley, Peckham Rye, Pegwell Bay, Tamworth Castle Grounds, Withernsea Promenade, Wycombe Rye.

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

### **A Quick Dash to Vilnius!**

Three GCR members headed to Vilnius, Lithuania, for a whirlwind 24-hour trip and took part in Vingis parkrun #19. With only 90 participants, it was a friendly and relaxed event, attracting plenty of parkrun tourists, including some from the UK.

We had some fantastic milestones and results to celebrate: **Samantha Hastie** completed her 150<sup>th</sup> parkrun with a time of 00:32:40, adding Vingis to her parkrun map and has completed 143 different parkrun locations. **Thippi Rashleigh** ran well and finished 51/90 runners and with a time of 29:09. **Willow Gibson**, proud parkrun 100 Club member, completed her 139<sup>th</sup> parkrun, 67<sup>th</sup> different location, finishing 85/90 overall with a time of 45:00.



It was a great mix of running, sightseeing, and enjoying Vilnius's history, food, and warm hospitality. January is a fantastic time to combine parkrun tourism with some travel—so why not give it a go?”

## **Club Championship (competing for the Westlake Trophy) - 2025**

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	
3	16 <sup>th</sup> Feb	<b>Watford XC, race 5</b>	Cassiobury Park, Watford	free	Club will send out details by email	
4 V	8 <sup>th</sup> Mar	<b>Panshanger Parkrun</b>	Panshanger Park	free	see parkrun website	
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	mid May	<b>MWRRL #1</b>		free	Club will send out details by email	
8	end May	<b>MWRRL #2</b>		free	Club will send out details by email	
9	start Jun	<b>MWRRL #3</b>		free	Club will send out details by email	
10	end Jun	<b>MWRRL #4</b>		free	Club will send out details by email	
11 V	22 <sup>nd</sup> Jun	<b>Welwyn 10k at Panshanger Park</b>	Panshanger Park		enter at Racesonline	
12 V	10 <sup>th</sup> Jul tbc	<b>MWRRL Mob Match, WGC tbc</b>	Ridgway Academy, WGC	free	Club will send out details by email	
13	start Jul	<b>Ware 10s</b>	TheChauncySchool Park Rd, Ware		10k or 10 miler enter at Racesonline	
14	end Jul	<b>Fairlands Valley Spartans 3k Relays</b>	Fairlands Valley Park, Stevenage	free	Club will send out details by email	
15 V	10 <sup>th</sup> /17 <sup>th</sup> August	<b>20.20k Centenary Run</b>	Stanborough Park South Lake near railway bridge	free	Club will send out details by email	
16 V	start-mid Sept	<b>Race 3 of the Hatfield 5k Series</b>	Affinity Water HQ, Hatfield		enter at Racesonline	
17	start Oct	<b>Standalone 10k</b>	Standalone Farm, Letchworth		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/>

## **Marathon Training Runs**

Planning to run a spring marathon in 2025? Whether it's your first or your 101<sup>st</sup>, you'll probably be aiming to crank up your mileage in the weeks leading up to the big day. We've put together a guide to organised marathon training runs and 20-mile races, and, in addition, this year we will be lightly hosting a GCR marathon training run with 10- and 20-mile options for any GCRs wanting to run a scenic local route with other runners of a similar pace.

The GCR run will comprise two 10-mile loops so you can run just one or go for the double. The run will start and finish at an accessible location with parking and toilets. We will plan for a mixture of roads and firm trails depending on weather conditions at the time. A GPX file and a downloadable course map will be provided nearer the time. Any questions or suggestions? Contact Rebecca Barden c/o [gardencityrunners@gmail.com](mailto:gardencityrunners@gmail.com)

<b>Event</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Entry</b>
Gade Valley Harriers' Marathon Training Run: 12 and 17m options	23 February 2025	<a href="https://www.gadevalleyharriers.co.uk/marathon-training-runs/">https://www.gadevalleyharriers.co.uk/marathon-training-runs/</a>
<b>GCR marathon training run: 10 and 20m options</b>	<b>16 March 2025</b>	<b>Details to be circulated in advance</b>
MK Festival of Running inc. 20-mile option	16 March 2025	<a href="https://www.mkrun.co.uk/">https://www.mkrun.co.uk/</a>
Gade Valley Harriers' Marathon Training Run: 17 and 20m options	23 March 2025	<a href="https://www.gadevalleyharriers.co.uk/marathon-training-runs/">https://www.gadevalleyharriers.co.uk/marathon-training-runs/</a>
Hillingdon 20	23 March 2025	<a href="https://www.atwevents.co.uk/e/hillingdon-20-8921">https://www.atwevents.co.uk/e/hillingdon-20-8921</a>
Oakley 20	23 March 2025	<a href="https://theentrypoint.co.uk/events/oakley-20-2025-EkM68eBxP9L3RJ7">https://theentrypoint.co.uk/events/oakley-20-2025-EkM68eBxP9L3RJ7</a>
Twin Lakes 20	23 March 2025	<a href="https://twinlakes20.com/">https://twinlakes20.com/</a>

### **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 Sean Bowen (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/)