



Garden City Runners News Release

11 May 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

GCR AGM this Wednesday, 14th May

Don't forget, GCR's Annual General Meeting will be held this **Wednesday 14th May** at 7.00pm at the Vineyard Barn, The Vineyard, Welwyn Garden City, AL8 7PU. What3words menu.cried.parks
Please do come along to hear more about what's happening in the Club, ask any questions you might have, and contribute ideas to shape our future direction.

AGENDA

1. To receive the Chair's Report.
2. To receive the Treasurer's Report and Financial Statements.
3. To receive the Membership Secretary's Report.
4. To receive the Captains' Report.
5. Vice-Chairman to introduce summer training programme
6. Election of Officers.
7. Election of Committee Members.
8. Any Other Business.

MWL – change of date for Race 4

Please note that Race 4 of the MWL will be on **Tuesday 1st July** and not Wednesday 2nd July as previously advertised. Details of the venue are in the Avery calendar, below. Full details of the first race in the series will be shared soon.

Halstead and Essex Marathon

Martin Mitchell reported from the Halstead and Essex Marathon: "**Clare Wildey Grover** and I traveled up to take on the hot and hilly Halstead Marathon, where the relentless sun and rolling hills made for a tough race. I was running well until mile 20, when my right hamstring cramped, forcing me to stop for a few minutes to stretch before pushing on to finish in 3:04:00, securing 13th place. Clare, tackling her first-ever marathon, ran brilliantly, crossing the line in an impressive 4:14:16 and finishing 3rd in her age group. We also bumped into fellow GCRs **Jamie Rose**, **Alex Faulkner**, and **Lorenzo Franchi**, who were also battling the harsh conditions. I would definitely consider this one of the hardest races I've done."

Below: Clare and Martin; Clare, Lorenzo and Martin



Phoenix 5

Helen Paine sent us this report: "Today I took part in this 5 miler organised by Stevenage Phoenix Running Club. I had to dig the GCR vest out from the drawer under the bed having not worn it since the second Midweek League Race back in June 2022. A subsequent injury and operation has seen a slow but steady return to running, covering much shorter distances than previously. However, with fewer 5 mile races on offer, a distance I had always enjoyed, I decided to enter. The course was a mix of the Stevenage MWL and the Stevenage parkrun courses meaning the inevitable Stevenage underpasses. As someone who normally runs early in the morning, I didn't enjoy the heat and missed my target of 45 minutes, finishing in 47:15. The ice cream from the van at the finish was the best part of the morning!"

Greenway Challenge Half Marathon



Four GCRs, **Richard Darley**, **Kath Evans**, **Tendy St Francis** and **Willow Gibson** (*pictured left*) travelled northward on Sunday morning to tackle the Greenway Challenge Half Marathon. Organised by North Herts Road Runners, participants begin a clockwise circumnavigation of Letchworth Garden City from Standalone Farm. Always a lowkey event with less than 200 runners, this year's event took place in very warm conditions which consequently led to some steady running! The promise of a plentiful supply of finish line cakes doubtless kept spirits high.

Runbelievable Challenges 'Born to be Wild' / Zigzag Half-marathon

Nadine Dwyer sent this report from her latest running adventure: "A double weekender for us: On Saturday, **Aiden** and I took part in the 'Born to be Wild!' event organised by Runbelievable Challenges and ran a half-marathon. This was a special event which was arranged to celebrate a runner's 300th marathon. The course is set in the Gravesend Cyclopark, with the added bonus of runners being able to opt for the Cyclopark Parkrun as the first lap of the event. A great medal and, as always with Runbelievables, a nice little goodie bag to go home with.

On Sunday, we headed to Barrow in Suffolk to run another half-marathon - this time with Zig Zag Running. Their events in Barrow use different routes and this time we were on the Windmill route. A very pretty route but I swear it gets hillier every single time we're there. We ran this event separately and to my surprise I made it back to the finish well before Aiden! ...but only because he took a wrong turning and ended up running an extra 4k. The ice lollies given out en route went down a treat and kept us going. Two days of tough running in the heat with no shelter or shade but we enjoyed it and the runner's tan is coming along nicely now...



Above: Nadine and Aiden celebrate their weekend of running challenges

Kimpton Fun Run, Bank Holiday Monday

Louise Smith sent us this report from Monday's Kimpton Fun Run: "It was the first time that I had attended this regular feature of the Kimpton Festival since 2019, and apart from the shock of realising that the very civilised 9k course had been extended to 10k, it was a joy to return to this informal but very well-organised country run that takes place every May bank holiday Monday.

You just turn up, pay £10 and are given a number. No pre-registration and numerous emails reminding you!

The children's 4k race starts first and shortly afterwards around 100 of us, including a gaggle of GCRs, gathered around the pretty village green trying not to shiver with the change of temperature, and then Race Director Haydn hoots his hooter and we are off.

Up and down fields, through kissing gates, across roads - expertly marshalled - through woods where bluebells still lingered, into Ayot St Lawrence and then mainly downhill to the finish with quite a sprint at the end.



Paul Guy (*in action, left*) won the prize for first Kimpton resident home, in 2nd place overall in 39:20 and a special mention to two of **Patrick Pearce's** boys: one coming 2nd in the junior event and one coming 6th in the adults'. I was very happy with my 63 minutes and a reminder of what a lovely event this is. [Here](#) are the full results.

As I left the Pimms stall and barbecue were getting going with long queues at both.

Definitely one to put in the diary for next May bank holiday Monday."

Parkrun roundup

121 GCRs made the most of the sunny weather to tackle parkruns in Herts and beyond. It was an especially good week for GCR women, with a hat trick of first ladies – **Jess Plant** was 1st at Stevenage in 20:38, where **Caroline Hale** was 2nd lady in 21:00, and **Alex Faulkner** 9th in 24:55. At Penrose, **Emily Owen** was 1st lady and 5th overall in 19:10, while **Juliet Vine** was 1st at Jersey Farm in 19:56.

Other GCR results included:

- **Sean Bowen** was 9th overall at Aldenham in 21:37.
- **John McDowall** was 5th overall at Ingrebourne Hall in 19:46.
- **Matt Baker** was 2nd overall at Westmill in 19:56.
- **Rob Hughes** and **Caroline Hughes** ran at Tapijn, Netherlands in 21:25 and 52:27
- At Panshanger, **Dan Pudner** was 6th in 19:22; **Bruce Judge** was 10th in 19:43; **Hannah Frank** was 3rd lady in 22:36; **Lauren Potter** was 4th lady in 22:52; **Rebecca Barden** was 5th in 23:48 and **Katy Healy** 9th in 25:25.
- At Cassiobury, **Paul Guy** was 2nd in 17:55.
- At Barclay, **Daniel Gordon** was 7th in 21:55.
- At Fort William, **Katharine Farrell** was 4th lady in 27:03, and at Dunstable Downs, **Amber-Leigh Marvin** was 5th lady in 24:36.

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

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:

| Race # | Event | Date |
|---------------|--|----------------------|
| 1 | Fred Hughes 10 | 19 th Jan |
| 2 | Watford Half Marathon | 2 nd Feb |
| 3 | Panshanger Parkrun | 8 th Mar |
| 4 | Hitchin 10k | 4 th 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!

| Avery Event # | Date | Event | Venue | Cost Approx. | Notes | Status |
|----------------------|----------------------------|--|---|---------------------|---|---------------|
| 1 | 19 th Jan | Fred Hughes 10 | St Columba's College, St Albans | £22 | enter at ATW Herts Seniors | completed |
| 2 | 2 nd Feb | Watford Half Marathon | Cassiobury Park, Watford | £38 | Herts Seniors enter at ATW | completed |
| 3 | 16 th Feb | Watford XC, race 5 Sunday League | Cassiobury Park, Watford | free | Club will send out details by email | completed |
| 4 V | 8 th Mar | Panshanger Parkrun | Panshanger Park | free | see parkrun website | completed |
| 5 | 6 th Apr | St Clare Hospice 10k | Hastingswood, Harlow | £16 | https://stclarehospice.org.uk/event/st-clare-hospice-10k-2024/ | completed |
| 6 | 4 th May | Hitchin 10k | Hitchin town centre | £22 | Herts Vets tbc enter at Racesonline | completed |
| 7 | Weds 21 st May | MWRRL #1 | St Albans, venue tbc | free | Club will send out details by email | |
| 8 | Weds 4 th June | MWRRL #2 | Epping Forest | free | Club will send out details by email | |
| 9 | Weds 18 th June | MWRRL #3 | West Herts venue tbc | free | Club will send out details by email | |
| 10 V | 22 nd June | Welwyn 10k at Panshanger Park | Panshanger Park | | enter at Racesonline | |
| 11 | Tues 1 st July | MWRRL #4 | Ashlyns School, Chesham Road, Berkhamsted HP4 3AH | free | Club will send out details by email | |
| 12 | 6 th July | Ware 10s | The Chauncy School, Park Rd, Ware | | 10k or 10 miler enter at Racesonline | |
| 13 V | Weds 9 th Jul | MWRRL Mob Match, WGC tbc | Ridgway Academy, WGC | free | Club will send out details by email | |
| 14 | 17 th July | Fairlands Valley Spartans 3k Relays | Fairlands Valley Park, Stevenage | free | Club will send out details by email | |
| 15 V | 17 th August | 20.20k Centenary Run | Stanborough Park South Lake near railway bridge | free | Club will send out details by email | |
| 16 V | 10 th Sept | Race 3 of the Hatfield 5k Series | Affinity Water HQ, Hatfield | | enter at Racesonline | |
| 17 | start Oct | Standalone 10k | Standalone Farm, Letchworth | | Herts Seniors tbc enter at Racesonline | |
| 18 | mid Oct | XC, race 1 Sunday League | | free | Club will send out details by email | |
| 19 | end Oct | Stevenage Half Marathon | Hampson Park, Stevenage | | enter at Racesonline | |
| 20 | end Oct | XC, race 2 Sunday League | | free | Club will send out details by email | |
| 21 | start Nov | XC, race 3 Sunday League | | free | Club will send out details by email | |
| 22 | end Nov | ATW Hatfield 5 miler | Herts University, Hatfield | | Herts Vets tbc enter at ATW | |
| 23 V | start-mid Dec | Festive 5 | Stanborough Common, WGC | | enter at Racesonline | |
| 24 | mid Dec | XC, race 4 Sunday League | | free | Club will send out details by email | |
| 25 | end Dec | Buntingford 10 miler | 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

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

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 and Evenings

Hill reps are enjoying an Easter break and will be back in May – watch this space.

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 to arrange pick-up.

"Puffa" jackets are also available for £42, please contact Martha Hall on: 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, visit our website <https://www.gardencityrunners.org.uk/> or our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/groups/gardencityrunners/