# Running for their lives: Greenham Common makes history as host to inaugural Half Marathon and 10K

**Monday 13 November, 2023**

In an unprecedented move, Greenham Common in Newbury, Berkshire is set to host its inaugural Half Marathon and 10K event. Renowned for its historical significance as the former RAF Greenham Common, pivotal in the Second World War and later serving as a Cold War nuclear base, the common transitioned into public parkland in 1997. Now popular with walkers, cyclists, and runners, it gained cinematic fame in 2015 as a backdrop for Star Wars: The Force Awakens.

Scheduled for Sunday, February 25, 2024, the event anticipates the participation of approximately 250 runners from the South. The meticulously designed routes will showcase iconic landmarks like The Fire Plane, the huge bunkers that once housed nuclear missiles, and The Control Tower, now transformed into a visitor centre and café.

Mark Hayes, Event Organiser and Greenham Common Half Marathon Committee member expressed enthusiasm, stating, "This marks Greenham Common's first-ever half marathon. Originally planned for 2022 to commemorate 30 years since RAF Greenham Common's closure, the event was delayed due to the pandemic. The common's historical sites make it an exceptional location for running, and we hope to unite the running community, volunteers, and spectators while raising substantial funds for premature babies."

The event will support New Life Special Care Babies, a Berkshire-based charity founded by Trevor Goodall after the tragic loss of his twin boys in 1995 who were born at 24 weeks. The charity raises funds to acquire vital lifesaving equipment for neonatal units across the UK. Trevor Goodall emphasised, "Our mission is to give premature and very sick babies the best start in life. Over the years, we've raised £1.5 million, benefiting more than 20 neonatal units and impacting the lives of over 1,000 premature babies."

Participants have the opportunity to contribute to the 'Splash the Purple' campaign by pledging additional amounts to New Life Special Care Babies. In return, they receive a distinctive New Life running t-shirt, adding a splash of purple to Greenham Common in support of premature babies.

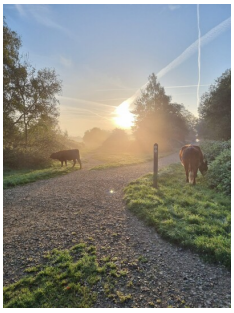
Funds raised through entry fees, sponsorships, and pledges will fund neonatal equipment, including Cold Lights for the Buscott Unit at The Royal Berkshire Hospital. These lights assist in cannulation procedures, minimising stress for babies. Any surplus funds will contribute to funding a ventilator to meet the respiratory and therapy needs of premature and very sick babies. The race medals are generously sponsored by Bloor Homes, a family-run housebuilder.

Further information on participating, sponsoring and volunteering can be found at https://www.greenhamcommonhalfmarathon.com/

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