

Gary's Story

Gary initially got into running at 15 so he could get fit to join the army. On leaving the Army he had put on weight and had to start running from scratch. He said that although he was determined to succeed, it was hard. This gives him a better insight into what it's like for people who are new to running. Suggesting that people who have always been fit don't always understand the journey a new runner takes to achieve.

Gary also ran all over Europe to keep fit while working for Pickfords Removals. He used this time as a stress relief as he feels running offers a sense of freedom. He also got to experience some amazing scenery including Italian Apls, Sintra national park in Portugal and the mountains and lakes of Switzerland. He kept up this lone running for around 16 years until leaving Pickfords, he then joined a running club. He started racing and running more miles, he most enjoyed Marathons and Ultra Marathons.

Gary started coaching and found he got more enjoyment from helping others than racing himself. He said 'I like session the improvement in people and watching their confidence soar as they achieve their goals and helping them with the next one'. He finds seeing people try hard and push themselves is very satisfying. Gary also has paced people for runs over various distances to help them achieve Park Run PB's, beat marathon times or achieve podium finishes.

Gary started working With Active Fenland in January 2016 the same time as helping to set up the newly formed Three Counties Running Club. He said 'I wasn't sure what to expect to start with but I had great support from Lauren at Active Fenland and we started a free beginners running group in Wisbech Park on Tuesday mornings.

The basic idea was to get them running 5k ASAP job done. Sounds simple! However although we had them all to 5k in a very short space of time we hit a snag. These people had become friends and were enjoying the sessions. So after the initial 6 weeks course and short discussion with our assistant coaches Colin Simpson and Sue George (also TCRC) we decided to continue for another 6 weeks. We have now run the session for over a year and can't imagine stopping it! It's also rolled into sessions that are suitable for completely new runners, improvers and established runners! It's all around a set area (a 400m loop normally) so nobody gets left behind/lost or abandoned. All the



activities are done on time so runners of all abilities can run in the same session. We often have TCRC members drop in on days off to run in the session or just to support one of the newer runners in their sessions. All of our Active Fenland runners have now ran 5ks/parkrun/colour run or race for life. Plus some have moved onto 10k distance! We've become a really good team and everyone helps one another. The best thing about Active Fenland is it's introduced me to a whole different type of runner. People who would normally say they'd never run or join a running club, those people who could never imagine running 3m/5k and a few weeks later they are running park run with people who have become friends and a whole bunch of TCRC members running the final stretch with them! Did I mention the coffee and cake after?'

There have been many highlights for Gary and the beginner running group. He said 'I think the main highlights have been seeing a lady who was shuffling around when we met her to running a parkrun light on her feet and a smile on her face and then seeing her run race for life with her daughter, which was her aim, then continuing to run because she's enjoying it. We are often told we've changed people's lives! That in itself is pretty cool'

Gary and all of the TCRC coaches who are working along with Active Fenland have a lot of experience to help you start your running journey or to help you achieve any running goal you may have. Active Fenland, Gary and Three Counties have gone on to set up a second beginner's session in the evening and which has been equally successful, leading on a fantastic Santa Run in Wisbech Park on the 17th of December. Many of the Active Fenland running group have joined Three Counties Running Club Gary thinks 'This is fantastic, as you then know you've done your job well and you've helped make them into runners! We've become a nice little family really and an extended family through TCRC'

www.activefenland.co.uk

Search for activefenland on   

 active
FENLAND