

Nick Young – Marathon Man



April 21st was the day of the London Marathon which local resident, and Hands Together Trustee, Nick Young ran whilst raising funds for **HANDS TOGETHER LUDLOW**. We caught up with Nick to see how it all went...

“06:45 on Sunday 21 April 2024. The alarm not needed, was precautionary but sleep last night had been fitful not fruitful. I have the yellow shorts, running vest, and the kit to facilitate a 69-year-old to cover 26.2 miles on London streets. Two pairs of running socks, a broken-in but nearly new pair of trainers (identical to those having already carried me for hundreds of training miles), a water bottle, and those vital little packets of superfood for the morning’s arduous journey. Superfood in the form of five Eccles Cakes!”

“Outside the Victory Services Club it was cold, though colder in shorts, a running vest and hoody. Few passengers travel the London Underground at 07:30 on Sundays from Marble Arch and it was no different today. Inside me was that schoolboy dread of a looming school exam. The hard work’s been done, let’s start, let’s get it done. I was setting off to run the London Marathon. This was not to a race against a clock or fellow runners; it had been trained for since the Autumn of 2023 not as a competition but simply as a test of physical – and mental endurance. Naturally, there was a hope for personal satisfaction and pride in completing the course. However, the real safeguard against failure would be a betrayal of that trust invested in me by so many generous sponsors and their £6,000 donated for my chosen charity, **HANDS TOGETHER LUDLOW**. I had given a predicted time to complete the course between 5.5 and 6 hours and at 11:10 am I was ushered into my starting wave with the many hundreds of likewise runners. We began a start-stop shuffle that soon became a continual flow towards an inflatable arch brightly lettered with ‘START’. No marks to take; no starting pistol; no whistle; just an increasing rate of progress up to my training pace and jostling shoulder to shoulder in a panting pack.”



“From the outset the crowds lining the route were joyful and enthusiastic in their support. Kindness, consideration, and support were the overwhelming sensations that I experienced. A runner dropped their phone and at least 3 fellow runners rushed to retrieve it for them. In another incident someone tripped and fell; runners stopped, helped them up asked if they were ok, did they need medical attention?”

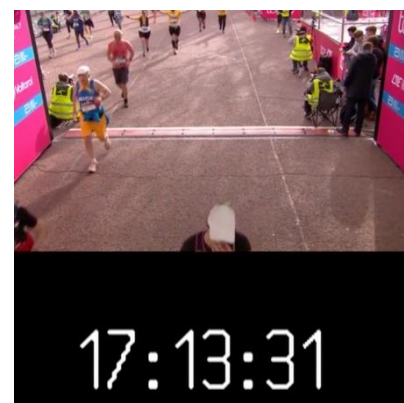
“Landmarks began to appear and soon the all-important massive bastions of Tower Bridge dominated the road rising skyward above a river of bobbing heads and bright shirts. Tower Bridge is almost at 13 miles and meant half the distance now done although many ‘old marathon hands’ would have you believe that 20

miles is more like halfway since the last 6 miles demand almost as much effort as the former 20. The going could not be described as easy but the rock music thundering from the pubs along the route, the jazz bands, the Asian drummers, even the Morris Dancers and above all the shouts and cheers from the densely packed crowds buoyed me up. I had been recommended to have my name emblazoned on my vest. I lost count of the times I heard the cries of, "Nick, you are simply amazing"! (I didn't let on at the time that my personal assessment of tiring legs was somewhat less so)."

"Then cramp. Right leg. Mainly right thigh. Looking down the quads had taken on the appearance of a tightly jumbled hank of rope and the hamstrings felt like iron rods. Stumbling towards the barrier I began to beat them into submission with a massage and careful stretching. After a few minutes the leg freed off sufficiently for me to manage a steady walk. After a mile or so I was able to pick up the pace a little more; had another Eccles cake, two salt tablets and some more water and then passed not only a rhinoceros but a telephone kiosk and a lady running with a domestic fridge strapped to her back..."

"On the homeward run, this was about Mile 21, meant that only a couple of back-to-back Park Runs separated me from that medal. Blackfriars Bridge, The Embankment with its old paddle steamer, The Tattershall Castle, and then the Houses of Westminster with the time at nearly 5 o'clock. By a happy coincidence Big Ben struck just as I was passing through, almost drowned out by the crowds cheering and shouting. I was beginning to believe them...perhaps I really was amazing...and then I looked and saw a runner alongside me with no legs. At least his legs below the knees were missing, an Ex-Serviceman who had managed to run using prosthetic blades. That was truly worthy of being called amazing – and humbling."

"Buckingham Palace, Victoria Monument and then just a little further down The Mall was the Finish. Under its arch, camera flashes, cheering, clapping, shouting and then steered into one of several lanes where I stood in line for a medal to be placed around my neck. I had taken 5 hours 47 minutes to cover 26.2 miles at an average fuel consumption of 5 Eccles Cakes, 10 salt tablets and a few pints of water. It was an amazing experience but perhaps so amazing that I will have no need to attempt it again!"



Everyone at Hands Together sends congratulations and a massive thank you to Nick for his determination, we know the training plan since Autumn 2022 has been challenging but the hard work and determination has paid off. We would also like to thank everyone who has donated to Nick along his Marathon journey, we are beyond grateful for your support. Nick's JustGiving page will still be active for a few more weeks, if you are able to make a donation we would really appreciate it. [Nicholas Young is fundraising for Hands Together Ludlow \(justgiving.com\)](https://www.justgiving.com/Nicholas-Young)

Staff and Volunteer training

Staff and volunteers have taken part in Induction training, and Assertiveness and Handling Conflict training.

Hands Together Ludlow's Annual General Meeting

You are cordially invited to join **HANDS TOGETHER LUDLOW** on the afternoon of 16th May 2024 at our building at 15 Lower Galdeford, SY8 1RU for our Annual General Meeting at 3pm.

The links to our Meeting Agenda, the Annual Statement of Accounts, and the Trustees' Annual Report can be found on our website [here](#). Please RSVP to general.admin@handstogetherludlow.org.uk by Wednesday 9th May. If you require a paper copy of any of the documents listed above please email:

general.admin@handstogetherludlow.org.uk.

An update on Citizens Advice services in Ludlow

Citizens Advice Shropshire have issued the following statement for us to share with our community.

"It is with regret that we have to inform you that due to funding limitations, we are no longer able to provide face to face advice at the Hands Together Ludlow Outreach. We are continually searching for funding to enable us to deliver face to face services through the County of Shropshire and hope we will be able to resume this provision of advice in the South of Shropshire in the future. We continue to provide advice across the County via our telephone service."

HANDS TOGETHER LUDLOW are able to make referrals for a telephone appointment; you can call us on 01584 873062 or pop into The Hub to do this. You can call the FREE Shropshire Adviceline: 0808 278 7894 (Mon-Fri 10am to 4pm) or visit citizensadvice.org.uk for further advice.

Although we are very saddened to lose the CAS service in Ludlow, we are now working closely with the Rough Sleeper Team, who will be using freed-up office space at our building for assessments for a few hours each Wednesday.

Volunteer Vacancies



Have you got some spare time during the week and not sure how to fill it? Come and join our volunteer team! We have some volunteer vacancies for those who are looking to give back to a local community. We have a range of vacancies available to suit people of all abilities and ages. There are opportunities in our Social Space to take orders and serve refreshments, prepare and serve the daily 'lucky-dip light lunch' while welcoming people into the Space. We are also looking for volunteers in the Community Fridge which is open Monday to Friday. Volunteers in this role weigh in and out food items to users, welcome people into the building amongst other day-to-day requirements.

If you enjoy cooking for a large group of people, you could help out at our weekly community lunch at Helena Lane on a Tuesday. We are currently looking for cooks and kitchen helpers to help prepare meals, serving, washing up and chatting with diners. You don't have to be a qualified cook, there's lots of support given.

If you'd like to get involved as a volunteer or find out more about the roles, please contact Nicola Read, our Volunteer Coordinator, on 01584 873062 or vol.coord@handstogetherludlow.org.uk.

Changes to the Social Space

Starting from Tuesday 7th May, the Space at Number 15 will be open from 11am-2pm Monday to Friday. The concept of the Social Space will remain the same; a safe place for anyone to come for a chat and refreshments and to take part in activities throughout the week. As well as refreshments being available throughout the opening hours for a minimum £1.00 donation, every day there will be a 'Lucky-Dip Light Lunch' available between 12:00-1:30pm for a minimum donation of £2.00. The lunch will be made using surplus food which has been donated to our Community Fridge and may well be different each day!

On Friday 10th May, we will be launching our new 'Friendship Fridays' which will be a place to meet new friends and get to know new people over different activity sessions, varying from colouring to board games. Our lucky-dip light lunch will still run on Fridays and is completely optional. We have plans to introduce some more activities in the not-so-distant future, keep an eye out for upcoming announcements!

A new look at Digital Support

Hands Together Ludlow are pleased to announce the launch of two new digital inclusion activities starting from Wednesday 8th May:



Tech Talk - Have you got phone phobia or tablet troubles? Our new 1-2-1 Tech Talk is the place to come! These sessions will focus on questions or concerns you have around a device, this could be a smartphone, a tablet or iPad or laptop, and relate to anything from what anti-virus protection is and how to download an app. These sessions are by appointment only and will last approximately 30 minutes on a Monday between 2pm-4pm with one of our volunteers. Please ring the office on 01584 873062 to book a slot.



Help Hub - Our new Help Hub is designed to help assist people with the completion of online forms and applications. The sessions for this will run twice a week on a Wednesday and Thursday between 10am-12pm at our building. Wednesday sessions will run with one of our volunteers who will be geared to assist with online forms such as Utilities, Pensions, DVLA, Council Tax and Repeat Prescriptions. Thursday sessions will also run with a volunteer. Assistance can be provided for Carer's Allowance, Attendance Allowance, Blue Badge, Universal Credit (strictly not Personal Independence Payment), Bus Pass and Pension Credit. Both of these sessions require appointments, please call us on 01584 873062 to book your slot.

Calling all Dog lovers!

Join in on a paws-itvely wonderful day at Ludlow Rotary Fund Dog Day at Stokesay Court on Sunday 28th July between 10am-4pm!

Ludlow Rotary are on the lookout for cheerful volunteers to lend a helping paw for a few hours at the Registration Teant, Tea Tent and Car Parks. Your enthusiasm will make tails wag and hearts smile! Best of all, your efforts will support 'Ludlow Rotary Cares' the community initiative dedicated to providing grants of up to £750 to local charities and organisations, enhancing community life in and around Ludlow.

Interested in being a part of this fantastic event? For more information reach out to Rotarian Tom Hunt (tomhunt@littlebarnca.co.uk).



National Grid's Priority Service is here for you

From time to time, power cuts can happen for reasons beyond our control and can be particularly worrying if you rely on electricity for medical equipment or if you are elderly, very ill or disabled. The National Grid's free Priority Services Register is there to give you, or your loved one, tailored support in a power cut.

You can join the Priority Services Register if you rely on electricity for medical reasons, use a stair lift or electric bed for example, have specific communication needs when contacting National Grid or if you would be distressed by an unexpected power cut or find it difficult to cope. Once registered, you can be supported in various ways, such as provided with a direct number to contact in the event of a power cut, provide help if needed through a partnership with the British Red Cross, update you in advance of a planned interruption to your supply and more. To join or for more information call 0800 096 3080 or register at nationalgrid.co.uk/psr-spring. If you need any help with how to apply, you can give us a ring to book a session at our new Help Hub for a volunteer to help you through the process.

**POWER CUT?
CALL 105**



Scan here to join our free Priority Services Register

New events this month (more information available on the Events page of our website)

Social Space: Monday to Friday, new opening times of 11am-2pm. Refreshments available for a minimum £1.00 donation. Activities on throughout the week.

Lucky Dip Light Lunch: Available Monday to Friday between 12pm-1:30pm for a minimum £2.00 donation.

Friendship Fridays: Every Friday between 11am-2pm at our Social Space. Different activities every week with refreshments and a light lunch available for minimum donations.

For more details of any of our events please call **01584 873062** or visit our website: [Events \(handstogetherludlow.org.uk\)](https://handstogetherludlow.org.uk)

HANDS TOGETHER LUDLOW is grateful for funding and support provided by the community and many other organisations, such as Millichope Foundation and the Hall Garth Trust.

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HANDS TOGETHER LUDLOW

connecting our community

Hands Together Ludlow

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Call us on: **01584 873062**

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website: www.handstogetherludlow.org.uk

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