

Marie Harman, Staff and Alumna

Why have you decided to join the Purple Wave?

I'm a University of Manchester Alumni, Students' Union staff member and generally a big fan of this city. If I'm going to join any wave, the Purple Wave is the one I'll feel the greatest sense of belonging with!

What did you have to overcome when deciding to run with us?

I had to overcome the fact I haven't done any long distance running since school, which was over 15 years ago! I joined Chorlton Runners by myself feeling really nervous, unfit and unprepared. I was made to feel so welcome and encouraged, I realised that I could run at slow easy paces and work my way up.

I also had childcare to factor in. My girlfriend works occasional weekends so I have to arrange babysitters so I can go out running.

Are you raising money for an interesting or important cause?

The Greater Manchester Domestic Abuse Helpline, a small local charity who offer a critical service to people across Greater Manchester and beyond. People living in an abusive relationship often are made to feel trapped, isolated and without any real choices about their life.

I want to raise money and also awareness about this fantastic charity. I've visited them a number of times, their volunteer and staff team are highly trained to signpost people in the most desperate of domestic situations. The team know a number of languages making them a popular service for residents who speak other languages.

This cause is important to me because I feel it's important to better raise the profile of smaller charities such as the Greater Manchester Domestic Abuse Helpline. Charities like this are like invisible emergency services to local people, so getting the right recognition and support from Manchester people is key!

How will it feel to run with hundreds of students and staff from the University?

It will feel wonderful running with hundreds of students and staff from the University. My role is to support student volunteers and fundraisers here at the Students' Union - to run alongside these students will be a privilege.



What do you want to achieve?

I want to encourage as many colleagues and students to run alongside me for The Greater Manchester Domestic Abuse Helpline. I'm encouraging new runners to take on a fundraising challenge such as this one. For me, it's going to be about the charity first and the time second. If this means coming in last but with a large group and fundraising total - I'll be chuffed!

How important is running and physical activity to you and why?

As a new Mum with limited spare time, running has been the perfect way to maintain my physical and mental wellbeing. I used to cycle to work but now I need to drive my daughter into nursery before coming to work. It's meant I've not been as fit as I used to be because I have less time to join clubs or cycle. Running has really changed my life in the last 6 months. I've made friends with people of all ages at Chorlton Runners and look forward to that feeling of exhausted accomplishment after each run.