

Kelly Stanford, Student

Why have you decided to join the Purple Wave?

Kelly was born with an extra electrical pathway in her heart and was eventually diagnosed with Wolff-Parkinson-White Syndrome last year, which put a stop to her plans to run in the 2017 race. Kelly's mum is a keen runner, and participates in charity runs to raise money for cancer, and Kelly felt she wanted to take after her mum and run for charitable causes, starting with the Purple Wave.



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

Luckily, thanks to a pioneering surgeon, Kelly's heart defect was cured, but since she was diagnosed, Kelly was unable to take part in any strenuous activity. Any kind of prolonged exercise, including walking, was potentially life threatening to Kelly. Kelly is still left with bruising on her heart and it's been difficult to get back into running again, but a love of the sport has encouraged her to get her running trainers back out.

Are you raising money for an interesting or important cause?

Kelly is raising money for The British Heart Foundation. They provided a huge amount of support during her illness, and were able to provide her with information that just wasn't available anywhere else. The surgeon who worked on her heart was a pioneer in the technique required to cure her, and was funded by the British Heart Foundation.

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

Kelly is really looking forward to taking part in the Purple Wave. She was keen to do it last year but couldn't take part due to her illness. Finally being able to run with the university, without any pain and raising money for a fantastic cause is, she said, going to be a great experience.

What do you want to achieve?

First and foremost, Kelly wants to raise as much money as possible for the British Heart Foundation, and raise awareness of Wolff-Parkinson-White Syndrome. Kelly herself admits she had never heard of the defect before being diagnosed, but the illness disrupts a regular heartbeat and so can have serious consequences if left untreated. Kelly wants to educate people on the symptoms, in the hope that more cases can be treated.

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

As Kelly's illness left her unable to take part in any activity, her health deteriorated. An extended period of inactivity and comfort eating, to help with the stress of her illness, has taken its toll on Kelly's wellbeing, but now a fit-and-agile Kelly wants to lose some weight, and get her health back on track.

To read more about Kelly's chosen charity, the British Heart Foundation, and information on Wolff-Parkinson-White Syndrome, please [go to the British Heart Foundation website](#).

To support Kelly on her Purple Wave journey, please [visit her Just Giving page](#).