



Pets change lives  
We change theirs



# Your running

*will change lives*

in more ways than you know!



**You can achieve anything! Ready? *Let's do this.*** 

# Anna's story

Your fundraising changes lives.

Turning 30 and keen to cross the London Marathon off her bucket list, Anna was delighted to be accepted for a place running on behalf of Blue Cross.

With no previous running experience, Anna started off slow with a gradual training plan to build up to the big day. She even started taking Indie, her beloved cocker spaniel, running. Indie proved a terrific training buddy, helping Anna to achieve her personal best in one park run!

After pushing her training schedule a bit too far, Anna worryingly suffered a training injury where she was given just a 50:50 chance of completing the marathon.

ANNA

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BLUE FOR PETS CROSS

Virgin money

“ With just 800 yards from the end, the crowd cheering her name gave Anna the final push she needed to cross the finish line. ”

But on race day, Anna was determined. She walked and stopped at First Aid stations when she needed to and despite 'hitting a wall' just 800 yards from the end, the crowd cheering her name gave Anna the final push she needed to cross the finish line.

With the medal around her neck and her husband there to congratulate her, Anna was elated. She had raised **£5,293** for Blue Cross. She was a marathon runner.

“ I didn't raise money just to hit the minimum target to run for a charity. I raised it because I wanted to make a difference and I couldn't be prouder. ”



# Welcome

And congratulations on taking your first steps towards doing something amazing.

Inside your Blue Cross Running Pack, you'll find tips, tricks and motivation to achieve your running goals and smash your fundraising target.

Whether you're signing up for a park fun run or have a place in a marathon, if you've never run before or you're a regular, we're here to cheer you on along the way and **help you cross the finish line safely – all while having a great time!**

Throughout the pack, you'll hear from people just like you on their running journey and pets who, thanks to the great contributions you make, can live the happy life they deserve.

We'll also show you how to maximise your fundraising and spread the word about the incredible thing you're doing.



Designed to keep you motivated and inspired throughout your running journey, your running pack is split up into the following sections:

**On your marks**, helping you find your running reason and getting started (Page 4-5);

**Get set**, giving you everything you need to find the race that's right for you (Page 6-7);

**Go**, ensuring you reach your running goals in a safe and enjoyable way.

So, keep me safe and refer to me time and time again.

**Are you ready?  
Let's do this!**

# What's your running reason?

We all have a reason for grabbing our running shoes.

Whether you've got yours, or are still looking for it, we're here to get you excited and remind you of why you're doing such a great thing! **What's your #runningreason? Share it with us on social media!**

## Running for health

**Helping you become a healthier, happier version of yourself. Did you know running improves both physical and mental health?**

It works wonders on your heart, helps to strengthen your knees and improves sleep, to name just a few benefits!

Head to page nine to check out our tips on keeping your joints healthy and happy throughout your training.

Running is also great for the mind.

As well as contributing to you feeling happier, it's known to keep your brain sharp and in nick, even as you age.



## Running for pets

**Taking steps towards a better life for pets in need.**

At Blue Cross, we believe in helping pets because pets help us. Every day, we support thousands of animals in need. Whether it is providing emergency veterinary care, expert behavioural help or finding happy homes.

When you race for Blue Cross, regardless of distance, you can be confident you are changing lives. With your dedication and determination, we can continue to help more pets in need every month, providing veterinary care, expert behaviour help and find them loving happy homes, as well as advice and education for current or future pet owners and pet bereavement support.

## Running for a challenge

If you're looking to push yourself and shake up the daily routine, what better way than to take up running. No matter your level or ability, working towards a target is a great way to give yourself something to focus on.

On your marks...

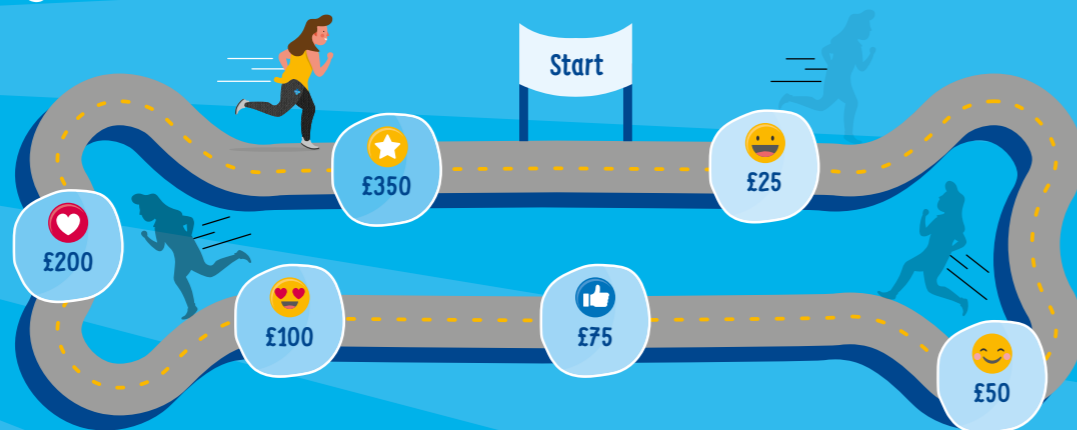
## Feeling motivated?

By running for Blue Cross, you'll have access to all our fundraising resources, as well as our dedicated events team, here to offer you support and guidance throughout your journey.

Finish

## Lap up the fundraising success

Imagine your fundraising is like a racetrack, the further you run the more you raise. Set your fundraising target and then start taking steps to reach your goal, with the Blue Cross team on hand to help and cheer you on!



**Hi! I'm Mr McGregor. My mate Bobtail and I were abandoned in box outside Blue Cross, we were so scared! Luckily for us we were found. Blue Cross were so kind and took great care of us.**

# The run that's right for you

Over the next few pages, you'll find information and inspiration on the variety of runs that are available. No matter what goal you have set or what your expectation is, we're here to help you find your perfect challenge.

1



## Have some fun! – Fun runs & self set challenge

Great for beginners, social butterflies and those with busy schedules

Running doesn't have to be boring! Gather your friends, grab a crazy outfit and get out there. Fun runs are a great way to get moving. They're usually 5k in distance so achievable for beginners but also a great challenge for regular runners. Find a locally organised event near you, or why not host your own?

If you can't commit to a specific date, or you'd rather spread it out, you can set an 'own pace' challenge. Whether you choose to run a number of miles over a week, month or year, you can fit your goals in and around you. Wherever, whenever!

## Taking it further – 5k & 10k runs

Great for intermediates and those looking to up their fitness levels

**5km** is a great way to begin your running journey. There are plenty held up and down the country throughout the year. You're never too far away from a 5k! Training for a 5k shouldn't be too restrictive or time consuming, so it's a great choice of event if you're juggling a busy lifestyle.

**10km** runs are the next step up for running events. At 6.2 miles, you're still not at a distance that demands a super strict regime, however there's no denying you'll need to up your training! Don't let this put you off though. If you've conquered the 5k, simply split your run into two so it's manageable.

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“

I'm not a pro runner by any means, I started running 16 months prior to running the London Marathon.

”

Anna, marathon runner for Blue Cross



Get set...

3



## Push yourself! – Half marathons & marathons

Great for the regular runners and those looking for a real challenge

**A half marathon.** Pretty self-explanatory, right? At 13.1 miles, it's all about starting to pace yourself and your runs. Your training should start at least four months in advance. As soon as you have your race date, plan backwards to ensure that you can fit in time to both run and rest.

The big one – **the marathon.** At the top of many bucket lists. A lot of dedication, time and hard work goes into training for this event. At 26.2 miles, it is no easy task. But the crowds cheering your name and that feeling when you cross the finish line makes it all worthwhile!

Check out the events leaflet in this running pack to discover some great events across the UK.



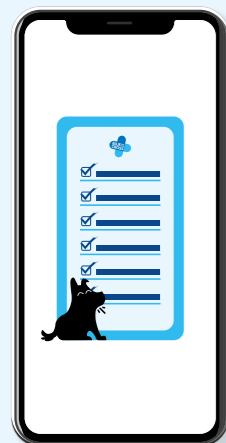
### Disclaimer

Entering and participating in any running events is entirely at your own risk. Blue Cross are not liable for any death, injury, loss or damage as a result of taking up a running activity or participating in an event. Blue Cross strongly advise that you consult your GP before taking part in any physical activity or making changes to your lifestyle.

# Getting started

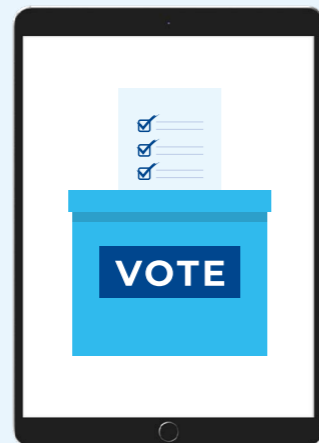
So, you're full of enthusiasm and now you're itching to get going. But where do you start?

We've listed some tips to help you get going on your running journey, whether you're a first timer or looking for a different challenge.



## Sign up

If you've decided to go for an organised event, you'll need to sign up to secure your place. They will ask you a range of questions from your health to your estimated running time. For the popular races, you'll be entered into a ballot.



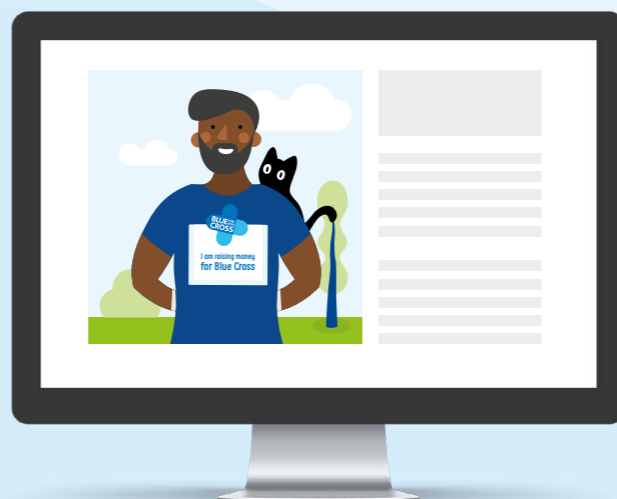
## Get ballot savvy

Don't be disheartened if you didn't make the ballot. There are often re-draws for a second chance at getting a place. And if not, there are many charity places available that will guarantee you a spot!

If you have a run in mind, get on their mailing list to be first to know when you can register for the ballot.

## Setting up your fundraising page

You've got a place. Amazing! Whether you're running directly for a charity or fundraising for your own causes, setting up an online fundraising page is a great way to track your money, tell people what you're doing and collect donations. We would recommend using platforms such as JustGiving, Virgin Money Giving and GivePenny.



Keep reading to discover our steps to fundraising success.

## Go shopping!

It is super important to ensure you have the right kit while training and for the big event. Make sure your clothing is suitable for the time of year, and that it's breathable.

Your running trainers are your new best friend. Many sports shops offer fittings and consultancies to ensure you find the perfect pair for you.

Check out the [Blue Cross website](#) to see where we have charity places and how you can secure your spot when you run for us.



# Top training tips



## 1. Nutrition

You may not have to change your diet too much from what it already is, but there are a few points to remember that will really help your running ability. Check out the nutrition leaflet in this running pack to find out more.



## 2. Warming up and cooling down

As important as the run itself, don't skip this from your routine. Warming up will prepare the body for exercise, which can help to reduce soreness and your risk of injury. Cooling down gradually reduces your heart rate and your body temperature. Much safer! Simply search online or chat to a physiotherapist to find a plan that's right for you.

## 3. Be prepared

Make sure you know what the terrain will be so there are no surprises on race day. If you're running through a city then you can keep to the pavement, but some races might be a bit more 'off-grid' and challenging underfoot.

## Get into the groove

A top-notch playlist is a great accompaniment to your runs. Not only is it a great motivator, but it can help you pace yourself.

If you're running in an event, double-check that music is permitted as some runs don't allow the use of headphones due to health and safety reasons.

Here are some great tunes we recommend for getting you in the mood and matching your pace:

140 BPM



Beat It  
Michael Jackson

160 BPM



Happy  
Pharrell Williams

180 BPM



I'm a Believer  
The Monkees

## Anna's additional training tips

Find an appropriate training plan that's right for you and your fitness levels

Practice running with the gels/drinks you'll be carrying on the day

# Steps to fundraising success

## Start early

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### Anna recommends:

“ Leave yourself plenty of time to raise money as it can take longer than you think. I started as soon as I found out I'd got a place! ”

So allow yourself plenty of time to collect those pennies and ease some of the pressure.

## Don't be scared to ask

Try not to fret about asking people for donations. Remember why you're doing such an amazing thing and let that shine through. Whether the cause is close to your heart or you're setting yourself a personal goal, people will be inspired by what you're doing and keen to support you.

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“ Local businesses can be really generous when contributing raffle prizes. ”

## Share your moments

The good, the bad and the ugly! Celebrate your training and fundraising successes, share your training struggles and funny moments. These all help engage your friends and family and encourages them to give more.

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“ Make the most of Blue Cross's fundraising collateral. All the material Blue Cross gave me helped my events feel more professional and prompted me to talk about the charity I was running for. ”

### Anna's tip:

Plan events far in advance and tailor them to the time of year, for example, bake sales don't work in January as everyone is on a diet!

10

2

## Be ambitious but achievable

It's great to aim high but try to set a target that is doable in your timeframe and something you're confident you can meet. That way, anything over it is a huge bonus! Every penny counts and will make a difference.

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## Get social

Use your platforms to spread the word beyond those closest to you. Keep people updated with your progress and your running reason. You can easily share your fundraising page and watch the donations roll in.

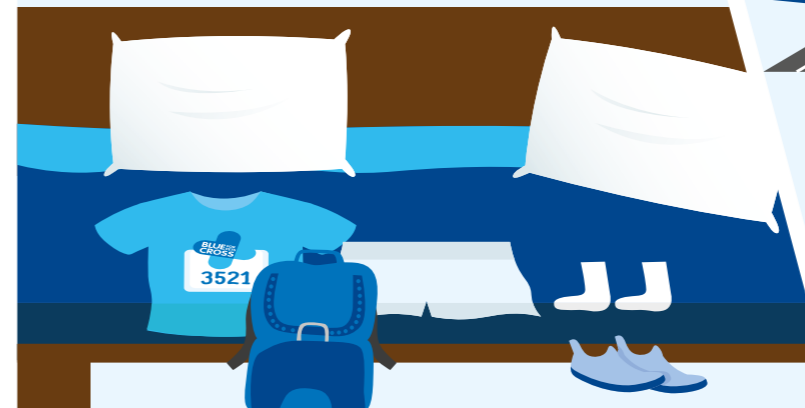
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## Give a little extra

By organising events and activities to boost your fundraising you can avoid 'fundraising fatigue'. Guess my time games (we've included one in this pack), cake sales, raffles, pub quiz nights are great ways to bring in the £££s.

# The big day

You've made it! Whether it's the biggest hurdle in your self-set challenge or it's race day, here are some tips to ensure everything runs to plan.



## Stick to what you know

Now is not the time to be trying new energy gels or trainers. Keep to what was comfortable throughout your training so there are no nasty surprises on the big day.

“ The day after, book yourself a full body massage! Believe me, it makes all the difference ”

# Submitting your money

## It is really important to send in the money you raise as soon as you can.

The sooner you send your sponsorship money to us after your event, the sooner we can help more pets in need.

## By post

Write a cheque or postal order made payable to Blue Cross along with a cover note stating your full name, address and fundraising activity. Send it to: **Community and Events, Blue Cross, Shilton Road, Burford, Oxon, OX18 4PF.**

For security reasons, please do not send cash in the post.

## By phone

Simply call us on **0300 790 9903** to pay by your debit credit card.



## Finish line, not finish times

While it's great to set goals for yourself, don't beat yourself up if you don't get the time you hoped for. Focus on your **#runningreason**, rather than how fast.



## Enjoy yourself

You've made it this far, put in so much hard work in your training, so this is just the icing on the cake. Be proud of how far you've come and have fun – it'll go quicker than you think!

## Online fundraising page

If you have raised money with Just Giving, Virgin Money Giving or GivePenny, the good news is you do not have to do anything else. These sites automatically pay the money to Blue Cross.

## Sponsorship forms

Don't forget to send in your sponsorship form so we can claim the Gift Aid and make even more money for the pets in our care.

## By paying in slip

If you have been given a paying in slip, please complete and take it along with your money to your local Barclays bank branch to pay directly into the Blue Cross bank account.

## By bank transfer

Please call the team on **0300 790 9903** for more information.

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## Contact us

Need more information? We're here to help you every step of the way.

### Visit our website:

[bluecross.org.uk](https://bluecross.org.uk)

### Email us:

[events@bluecross.org.uk](mailto:events@bluecross.org.uk)

### Write to us:

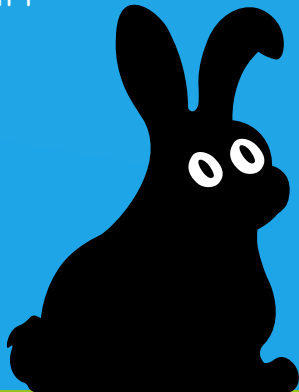
Community and Events,  
Blue Cross,  
Shilton Road,  
Burford,  
OX18 4PF

### Call us:

0300 790 9903

### Social:

Follow us on our social channels to keep up to date with latest on fundraising.



[bluecross.org.uk/fundraising-and-events](https://bluecross.org.uk/fundraising-and-events)

Blue Cross is a charity registered in England and Wales (224392) and in Scotland (SC040154)