

## **Rachel Harrison, ran the London Marathon for Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation and here's why.....**

I started running about 10 years ago, when I was about 2.5 stone heavier and I wanted to lose weight. When I moved to Sturminster (6.5 years ago) I could only run about 4 miles, I joined the Dorset Doodlers Running Club and my running has gone from strength to strength. If you asked me a couple of years ago, I would have said that there was no way I would, or could, run a marathon. However, the distance I was running slowly increased and hearing other Doodlers talking about their experience of running the marathon really inspired me. I decided that I wanted to fundraise for Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation (JDRF) as my goddaughter was diagnosed with Type 1 a few years ago.



The day itself was amazing and the weather was cool but dry and bright. The atmosphere was very relaxed and friendly and I wasn't nervous at the start, which really surprised me. The first 7 miles flew by and it felt like I had only been running for about 10 minutes. It then got progressively harder and miles 17 to 22 were hideous, my legs ached so much and I just wanted it to end! The last 4 miles went by quickly and they were nowhere near as bad as I'd thought they were going to be. I had heard so many stories about how the last 6 miles would be horrendous and people describing how they "hit the wall", so I was expecting to really struggle. However, the final stage was no worse

than the preceding 5 miles, except I had the finish in my sights! People were cheering me on, reading the name on my vest, which really helped.

The pain when I stopped was something else. I just wanted to lay on the floor and never get up again, but I knew I had to keep moving. Walking to meet my family at JDRF's recovery venue, felt about 5 miles, but it was actually only a few hundred meters from the finish. When I had a shower, I realised how much I hurt, I think the only parts that did not hurt were my hands and my head. It was like I had been punched all over. Would I do it again? Probably, I am so glad that I have done it and despite the pain, I loved the event and I would recommend it to anyone. Also, all those people that think they could not do a marathon - yes you can!

Rachel Harrison