

# Running 100 Miles ... for Ollie

In an act of incredible bravery, endurance - and some would say madness - Wokingham photographer Shaun Edwards is in training for an extraordinary fundraising event on behalf of local charity the Ollie Young Foundation - running a 100 mile race!

The Thames Path 100 2013 is a 100-mile *continuous* trail race along the Thames Path from Richmond in South West London to central Oxford. The race is limited to 250 participants and the course has a cut off completion time of 30 hours. Needless to say it is not a race for everyone and requires a supreme level of stamina and fitness. The event is organised by Centurion Running and commences at 10am on Saturday, March 23rd.

Shaun Edwards is a local photographer, father of two young children and also a friend of the Young family. He started running in his late 20s and has several marathons under his belt plus half a dozen long-distance runs (30-50 miles) too. He has been in training for the Thames Path 100 for several weeks now, currently running up to 70 miles per week around his work and family commitments.

As Shaun works 5 days per week in an IT role and Saturdays on his photography business, the commitment is significant, routinely requiring 5.30am starts and very late nights. He trains with a backpack and sees his unconventional training times as excellent preparation for the real event, since he needs to be used to running while tired.

"All marathons and endurance runs are an achievement, but completing the Thames Path 100 would take things to a whole new level. The commitment I'm giving with all the training means that I couldn't do the race just for the sake of it and I can't pretend it's not hard, regularly going out to run in the cold and rain for four hours, but having such a worthwhile target as I do in raising funds for the Ollie Young Foundation makes all the difference. It's great to have the support of



Mizuno too [a Wokingham based company who have generously provided Shaun with several items of running gear]. I'm aiming to complete the race in under 24 hours and it is actually quite fitting that I'll be finishing in Oxford, just a mile or so from Helen & Douglas House Hospice, where Ollie spent his final weeks."

Ollie's mum, Sarah Young, says:

"We've seen some fantastic fundraising since we launched the Ollie Young Foundation last year and appreciate every contribution which will help our objective of funding research into brain tumours

in children, but the level of commitment and determination by Shaun in doing this 100-mile run is something else. He has been a true friend since Ollie first fell ill and Simon and I are so grateful for what he is doing for our charity. The Ollie Young Foundation will support him in every way we can, including during the long hours of the run. He can count on us to be there throughout, cheering him on!"



Ollie, photographed by Shaun

In recognition of this monumental effort please, please go to Shaun's fundraising page at [www.justgiving.com/runningforollie](http://www.justgiving.com/runningforollie) and give whatever you can

Brain tumours are the biggest cancer killer of children. Your donation will fund paediatric brain tumour research to find a cure or prevention for this awful disease.

The Ollie Young Foundation is a registered charity, launched in June 2012 by Ollie's parents Sarah and Simon Young. It is run by the Youngs and a dedicated committee.

Ollie died on the day before his 6th birthday, at the end of February 2012. He had an inoperable brain tumour and died only twelve weeks after first displaying symptoms.

The aim of the Ollie Young Foundation is to provide direct funding for research into brain tumours in children. A proportion of the fundraising will also be allocated to Helen & Douglas House Hospice and CLIC Sargent, two charities who have provided vital support to the Young family.

If you have never visited the charities website, please do so at: [www.ollieyoungfoundation.org](http://www.ollieyoungfoundation.org). Recommended reading: Ollie's Story.

Why not organise a fund-raising event of your own? No one is going to ask you to run 100 miles in 24 hours - that is the preserve of super-heros - but there are lots of great ideas on the website.

And finally ... Shaun, words can't describe the generosity of your spirit. We wish you all the very best in this incredible challenge.

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