

Portsmouth Joggers Newsletter Edition 25, Winter 2024



Hi there Joggers. Well here is Edition 25 of our Newsletter. Our Silver Anniversary! I started it as a monthly edition to help Joggers stay in contact during Covid, when we couldn't meet together. After Covid the decision was made to go quarterly when we were able, once more, to all meet together. I hope you all still enjoy reading it. This time we have reports on various events, including the Great South 5k and some of the ingenious ways Joggers made sure they did their Great South 10 miles to get the medal and Tee-shirt as well as various other events.

Chair's message

Hello fellow Joggers!

As the dark nights draw in, I am always so grateful to be a Portsmouth Jogger. Running with the group really motivates me to get out running on those dark evenings, and to overcome my desire to snuggle up on the sofa eating my weight in chocolate after work instead. Club nights also provide a feeling of safety for those whose of us who may feel uncomfortable or unsafe when running alone in the dark. If you haven't already, please dig your hi vis kit and/or running lights out from the back of the drawer, or buy new ones, so that we can be seen whilst out running. If you do not have anything suitable and cannot afford to buy anything new, please have a chat with one of our welfare officers (Sue Clarke and Simon Evans) and they will see what the club can do to help you. We want everyone to be safe when running with us ☺

Since the last newsletter, I was lucky enough to take a huge haul of old PJC race medals to Runr to Support their Medals for Kids campaign (more about this later in the newsletter). We had a fantastic whole-club run in Southsea in October, to say farewell to the old coastal path before it closed for its overhaul. Not only were we filmed by a drone(!) but we also had a post-run social in the pub. Thanks to everyone who joined us for the run.

The HRRL season is now well underway, with three races down. We have had a good turnout at each of those which, as Ladies' captain, I am eternally grateful for, but it would be great to see a few more ladies joining us at these events. I'm a bit fed up of the boys beating us on the numbers! The next four races are Gosport half, Victory 5 mile (which takes place at our very own Lakeside), Stubbington 10k, and Ryde 10 miles. If you enter Ryde 10 the club will reimburse you the affiliated entry fee, so you essentially get a free race! It's also on my birthday, so we will head for birthday drinks and cake in the pub afterwards, before we catch the ferry home.

The SCCL also got started at the beginning on November. These 5 mile cross-country runs are really fun, and we would love to see lots of you there at the next races. Even better, they are free for EA affiliated members, and only £2 for non-affiliated members. Everyone loves a bargain right?! Speak with our captains Simon and Ally if you would like to know more.

In exciting news, we now have the full range of club vests and t-shirts back in stock! We are sorry this has taken so long. If you have been patiently waiting for the kit to come in, please send Chris Ellis a message and he can hook you up with what you need. We also have club hi-vis tops, which are very popular.

We're always interested in how we can make the club the very best it can be for our members, and are constantly looking for ways that we can evolve and improve. So if there is anything that the club can do to make your experience with us even better, however big or small, please let me know and we will see what we can do. Currently, the committee are working towards improving our Health and Safety procedures, and our Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity (EDI), so if you have any feedback about those areas in particular, we would love to hear from you. Please contact secretary@pjc.co.uk.

Happy running everyone.

Kate Lewis

The Spine Race!

This is a race I did in June, publicised as Britain's most brutal race.

As I get older and seem to be getting slower by the week I look for races that challenge me and are achievable. I have had a few friends that have done or attempted the Spine race. The 3 main races that they do are the south challenger 108 miles, the north challenger 160 miles or the full Spine 268 miles. I opted for the south challenger as the other two seemed too scary. But even the south challenger had 22000 feet of ascent with the route being very technical and challenging.

The race starts in Edale following the pennine way and finishes 108 miles later in Hardraw with a cut off time of 60 hrs. I travelled up on the Thursday by train and booked into my hotel in Hathersage, Edale was only a 10min train journey away. This is in the middle of nowhere so trains are the only public transport. There are no taxis. I caught the train on Fri to Edale for kit check. There is a lot of mandatory kit for your safety it's very remote. I tried to be as conservative as I could with buying lightweight gear but at the same time making sure it saved me if I got into trouble. My kit weighed 8kg others were heavier. With kit check passed I travelled back to the hotel to pack my drop bag and made sure my back pack was in order and packed how I needed it. Getting to the start was a bit of an issue as trains were hit and miss due to cancellations and strikes. Unbelievably a member of public Peter who was staying in my hotel offered to take me in his car to the start at 6.30am.

Race day came round very quickly met Peter downstairs and he drove me to the start he would not expect any money. Such a kind thing to do.

I dropped my drop bag off, this can only be accessed at the only check point which is at 46 miles.

8am the race starts. Uphill from the start and within 3 miles you hit Jacob's ladder, Kinder fall and Kinder high the climb seemed to go on forever. Weather was amazing but we all knew it wasn't going to last. Within 2 hrs the heavens opened and I had reached bleak low, run walking on a tiny muddy path on top of a hillside with a huge drop on one side that had become a small stream of mud was not easy.

The rain did not ease. I got to 33 miles where there is 'Nickys food bar' she stays open for every runner and takes pre orders on line before race day. Its a large metal container in the middle of nowhere. Got inside, it was so nice to be out of the relentless wind and rain. Picked up my food and sat down to eat. I probably stayed to long as within 200 mtrs of leaving I became so cold I could not stop shaking. I decided to go back to Nickys and put warmer drier clothes on, this saved my race. It's all about adapting. By now the bogs were relentless my feet must of been under water for hours just trying to move forward.

I finally got to the checkpoint at 46 miles in 16hrs. I followed a few other runners to the cp as the navigation was quite tricky and super hilly. You are allowed to be at the cp for 6 hrs I stayed for 3.5hrs. I ate a meal drank loads of tea and tried to sleep (20 mins) then ate some more. Finally got back out just before sunrise on day two. 62 miles to go so pushed on, one foot in front of the other.

Next mile stone was Malham cove and malham tarn. Malham tarn there is a small stopping point where you can have a quick hot drink and fill up your water. I left here at 9pm with another runner called David. The weather was now worse than ever. The wind 50mph was full in the face the rain hurt. The next bit for me was my favourite part. David and I hit Fountains fell 2100 ft of climb got over the top and coming down the otherside was so treacherous mud mud and more mud it was so hard to stay up right. At one point I fell heavily and had to stop for 10 mins to compose myself. Once down from Fountains fell we hit Pen y ghent 2300 ft of climb again going up was nowhere near as hard as going down. The top of pen y ghent is a 50ft rock face you have to climb on your hands and knees 2am pitch black using a head torch 50mph wind and relentless rain this was not easy but weirdly enjoyable. The otherside of Pen y ghent is Horton Ribbendsdale with another two climbs of 1000 ft but once up that 24k to go. David wanted to push on as fast as he could to try and get in under 48 hrs. I told him to carry on as for me this was not a race as such but an adventure I didn't mind for the first time in my life how quick I did it I would be happy with 59.59. As David disappeared into the distance I got my watch out with the gps on it that had been on charge for 6 hrs. We had been using David's. The watch hadn't charged and had drained the power pack. So I got my hand held back out. This wouldn't turn on, it had got wet. So I got my phone out it only had 5% left this drained quickly. So moved forward using finger posts this wasn't easy as they were about a mile apart. All of a sudden there was a random runner not in the race he told me there was a runner 20 mins behind and I was on course so I waited. Once he had caught me I ran with him. We went all the way to Gayle 3 miles to go but for some reason we part ways and then I got hopelessly lost. I then asked around found my way back on course and eventually got to the finish in Hardraw. Then realised I had a map in my bag that I could have used, part of the mandatory kit. Sleep deprivation can do weird things to your thinking. 52 hrs 9 mins, 20 mins sleep, longest I've been out on my feet.

One of the best experiences I've ever had in my years of running.

Hardest thing I've ever done but also the best thing I've ever done.

Russell Tullett

Gina's Journey

#runningismy meditation #healingismy growth

In October 2019 I did my first Great South Run...

After running the Race For Life earlier in the year it was the big goal that got me back into fitness. It went fine, but every run that followed after that I felt a niggle with my knee.

Whatever happened to me, I don't believe that running was actually the original cause of the issue. A couple of weeks before the GSR I had sat on a spin bike and jolted to a stop. I felt a twinge somewhere in the top of my leg/hip but I was fine and I do not remember feeling pain afterwards. I was also going through an emotionally difficult time. I will never truly know or understand what it was that caused it, maybe a combination of things but that doesn't matter. The only thing that matters is what you do about it.

I stopped running on it when I realised something wasn't right and in December that year I couldn't walk for a couple of weeks. I decided to heal further and completely stop running. I did that for a year. I was even scared of anything slightly weight-bearing so was careful with yoga etc and mainly stuck to meditational walking when I could.

In March 2020 I couldn't walk again for two weeks. It was no coincidence that COVID became apparent at the same time. I had physiotherapy massage treatment for a while and did what I could to help it.

On Jan 1st 2021 I started running again. I decided to work towards my first half marathon (The London Landmarks Half Marathon). In July 2021 I achieved that. I kept going out on long runs every Sunday morning and that same year in December 2021 I did my first Full Marathon (Portsmouth Coastal Marathon). I had caught the bug for running and from that day forwards I was signing up to events and setting myself new goals.

But in 2022 I realised my leg was slowly deteriorating again and after my second marathon in July (Big Heat) and my first Ultra (Winter Cross Ultra) in December I decided in 2023 to reduce my distances and took a four month break from running. I got further treatment from a couple more physiotherapists, a chiropractor and also purchased an ions therapy device. I also got shockwave treatment which helped. Later that year I decided to take up triathlon which would keep my fitness levels up and the running mileage down. I started some sea swimming and pool swimming and building up all the equipment I would need for this sport.

In September 2023 I attempted my first fun triathlon with a kayak element instead of a swim (The Reverse Soggy Bottom Triathlon). Then over the Autumn and Winter of 2023 and first half of 2024 I was hitting running PBs on lots of races. I decided to get back into long distance again and go for a marathon PB at Southampton in April 2024 which I did achieve. As I had the training in me I didn't let that go to waste and I followed it with an Ultra in May 2024 (Big Way Round).

I began my first Triathlon season this year with Portsmouth Triathletes and it has been brilliant! I've done a couple of Sprint, Standard distances, Duathlons and my very first Ironman 70.3 and Middle Distance Triathlon in Weymouth.

Over the last five years I have learnt that the less invasive techniques of healing help me the most. I've gone backwards as much as I have gone forwards at times. I will avoid any deep tissue sports massage that is too invasive and focus on holistic techniques...Yoga and Pilates Stretching and Strengthening, Swimming, Holistic and meditational therapies, regular steams and saunas, cold showers following hot showers and regular cold treatments. I listen to my body and mind and I let them guide me to what is right.

I am currently working towards my next goal which is a marathon in December.

The last five years have probably been the toughest and best years of my life for many reasons.

I have learnt to release emotional pain so it does not cause physical pain in my body.

I have all the tools to effectively manage and fight this.

I am determined to heal 100% and I will not give up. It is all about finding the right balance with exercise, healing and recovery. ❤️

It is sad that the Great South Run has been cancelled today due to weather conditions, especially after seeing the sheer volume of preparation works on Friday whilst I was out running. But they made a difficult and wise decision and I'm glad they did.

I have missed several races over the last few years so that I can focus on healing. It doesn't matter. I hope that this inspires you to keep on going and not give up. To adapt and find another goal and to keep listening to your mind and body and do what you love! ❤️

Gina Ledger

Our Phil Pollard

Jogger Phil Pollard was interviewed by Portsmouth News before the Great South Run. He has run every Great South 10 mile run since it began in 1990. Apparently the first one was in Southampton, was quite hilly and had around 2500 people running it. It now has around 20,000! Phil's fastest time was 59mins 50secs. He says his current speed is around 2 1/2 times slower.

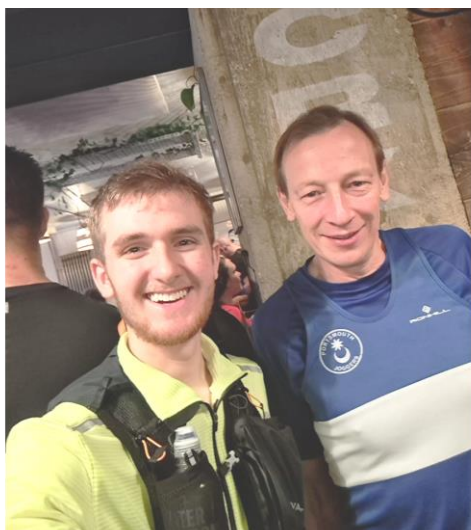
Phil did run this year's Great South Run, unofficially, with a group of friends on the Sunday when the wind and rain eased off a bit. Photographic proof below!!! So he will get his 34th T-Shirt and most importantly medal!



Phil was also in evidence on the Saturday at the Great South 5k and the Children's and Junior races. On the Finishing line with Sue Clarke!



Some other Joggers went out and did their own Great South Runs too. See evidence below!



Three Intrepid Great South Runners

Left :- Darren King and Lewis Clarke

Right:-Debbie Pentland

Well done to them and to all those who braved the weather and did 10 miles anyway



Great South 5k

Well, half a dozen Joggers + some family members, turned up on the Saturday to run the first of the Great South Run events, the 5k. Some of us met in Castle Field near the baggage tent, for a pre-race photo, before heading off to the start. We were extremely lucky with the weather, sunny but not too warm. I am certainly not a distance runner so I love the 5k. You get all the build-up and shout outs that the 10mile runners get, but don't have to run so far.

Anyway, back to the race – After the shout-outs and warm-up we were off. I got off to a good start and I had set myself the task of running a steady pace that I could maintain for the whole 5k, no walking!! I also set a target of under 40mins. Previous times were around 36mins. But time has taken its' toll and I am a bit slower these days. Anyway I managed to keep to my steady pace and was helped along by marshals and supporters cheering us as we went.

Running towards the finish it was great to see our own Sue Clarke and Phil Pollard cheering us in.

I was really pleased that I achieved both my goals, no walks and I finished in under 40mins, my time was 38:48. Slower than previous years, but I did it.

Celia Oxley

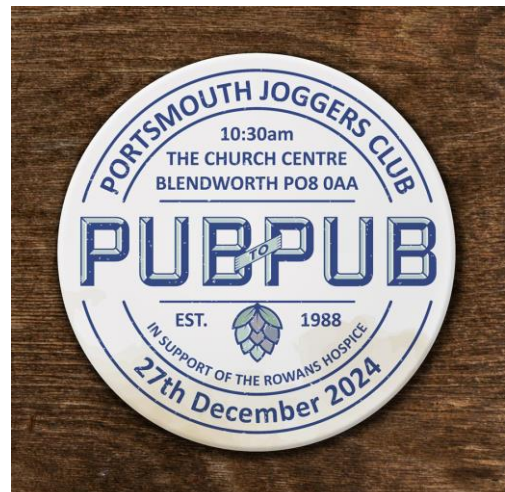


An Up-Coming Event – Pub2Pub!

Don't forget to sign up to the Pub2Pub gang! 10k of road and trails, or a 5k walk, on 27th Dec. All proceeds go to Rowan's Hospice, a charity very close to the club's heart. Would be lovely to have a sea of blue and white at the event, showing everyone what a fabulous running club we are!

Tempted? Sign up here:

<https://racesignup.co.uk/site/event.php?eventid=4555>



Southern Cross Country League

So here we are again! another season of Cross Country begins.

The first race of the season was at **Benyons Enclosure** on the 2nd of November.

For those new to Cross Country, the season consists of 5 races (although it was suggested that this may become four races this year) all of which are 5 miles in distance and are free to enter if you are EA affiliated, or £2 if you are not. (this is to cover insurance). No registration is required, just turn up in your club shirt (we have spares if you haven't got one)

Any runner that has run a consistent pace above a 5.30 minute miles for men or 6 minute mile for ladies during a race in the last 12 months is excluded from the league. This means that the races are open to almost all club members. It doesn't matter whether you run, walk or crawl your way around the course. The idea is that you just come and enjoy the beautiful countryside, maybe get a little muddy and join the team for cake at the end.

If anybody would like to try cross country and is a little nervous about giving it a go please do join us. Talk to anybody that has taken part in these events and they will confirm that they are fun and that pace doesn't really matter, these races are totally inclusive.

Up-coming fixtures are :-

Alice Holt - 24-11-24 at 11.00

Lord Wandsworth College – 15th December 11.00

If you would like any further information please talk to myself or **Ally J Maude**
As always there will be a car share to all races leaving from Lakeside, timings TBC.

P.S if anybody is adept at packing away pop up tents please do join us.

Simon Evans

Southern Cross Country Race 1 – Benyon's Enclosure

There is something that I just love about these Cross Country runs that can't keep me away.

...And this location is definitely one of the best.

They are challenging but interesting. The distance is not too far...about 5 miles, so you can push yourself to a decent pace all the way. That is what makes them awesome.

A really disappointing turnout for the PJC Ladies team (not even a full team with just 2 ladies, does that even count for anything?) and you just can't use other events as an excuse....other teams manage just fine. Where are all the strong women? Come on Team PJC.

Some tough hills in places but some fun downhills that totally make up for it and these races are just brilliant for training.

I slow on the uphill and speed on the downhill - just follow what my body is telling me!

A stream to run through and some branches to hop around. Just love it!

I'd rather run somewhere like this any day.

If you want to get better then you need to put yourself out there and just go to some events.



How my run went...

I tried to get further forward at the start but it was a bit crowded so a little slow out. However a fairly decent paced 8 minute miler run for me. I knocked a minute off last year. Just need to get into those 7s!!!

I drove up on my own as I needed to get back for work and just made it in time.

In my opinion the £5 parking I spent was worth it. I'm already affiliated but if I wasn't then the extra £2 would have been worth it too! A few quid well spent on your health and well-being and to also feel a sense of satisfaction and achievement.

Thank you Ella for holding up the ladies team with me. A true superstar!

I hope to see more of you taking a step out of your comfort zone and joining us for the next event on Sunday 24th November at Alice Holt Forest.

Gina Ledger

Upcoming HRRL Events/Races for your Diaries!

We know lots of you are probably feeling quite deflated after the cancellation of the GSR. Well don't let all that hard work and training go to waste... why not sign up to one (or more) of these local races instead??

For those who don't know, the Hampshire Road Race League (HRRL) consists of a series of 12 races across Hampshire and the surrounding areas. You can take part in as many or as few as you like, and if you are UKA accredited (a great reason to become accredited if you aren't already) you get ~£2 off the entry price for each race and, most importantly, contribute towards the PJC team. Note - non-affiliated members can still enter, but do not score points in the league. You must run at least 7 races over the season to qualify for an individual place in the table, but you contribute to the team places every time you run. The remaining races for the 24/25 season are as follows, and you can find links to them all via hrri.co.uk.

17th Nov - Gosport half marathon - Entries open

1st Dec - Victory 5 mile - Entries open

12th Jan - Stubbington 10k - Sold out! There is a FB page for people wanting to transfer places though if you are keen to take part.

2nd Feb - Ryde 10 mile - Entries open (the club will reimburse you the affiliated entry fee too, so it is essentially free!)

6th April - Salisbury 10 mile

12th May - Alton 10 mile

18th May - Netley 10k

15th June - Alresford 10k

Early July (date TBC) - Lordshill 10k

Now you know what the race options are, let's talk prizes! We want you to know what a valued member of the team you are and, as such, we want to make sure you are rewarded for your hard work and dedication. So here's what you can earn...

Every race = **Cake!**

2 races = **A PJC buff**

4 races = **A PJC pin badge** - specially designed by men's captain Pete and with a new design for this season!

7 races = **A HRRL mug** - Produced by the league organisers and includes the final league table for your gender – with your name on it!

8 races = **PJC kit** - Not our normal kit – a specially designed HRRL team piece of kit

12 races = **The illustrious HRRL 12 in 12 t-shirt** - Produced by the league organisers at the end of the season to celebrate those who managed to run all 12 races over the season.

The team spirit at the league races is amazing and, no matter what speed you run at, every single Jogger is an integral part of the team. There's post-race cake, and we love cheering everyone round and/or over the line. We can't wait to see you at a race or two.

Kate (HRRL Ladies' captain) and Peter (HRRL men's captain)

Overton 5 (8th September 2024)

On the 8th September, I, along with hundreds of others, embarked upon the first HRRL event of the season; the Overton 5 Mile Road Race. Having only recently joined the PJC, it was my first league event, but I was excited to take part.

After a fairly long drive up from Portsmouth (car-sharing was an efficient and economical method of travel), the race appeared to be set for drizzly and decidedly damp weather. However, no sooner had I pinned my allocated number to my shirt, the sun broke through the clouds. The cold breeze and intermittent rain was replaced by an unexpected, but welcome, heat. There was a strong PJC contingent present, with upwards of twenty runners wearing the blue shirt of the club.

It was very pleasant for me, a relative newcomer, to see the myriad of different clubs represented, as well as the huge variety in runners. It was clear that all were welcome, no matter experience or pace. As we all began to limber and warm up, the energy amongst us grew. I lined myself up towards the back, which seemed like the sensible choice. A long trail of people snaked its way up the country road ahead.

As the race got underway, the usual kerfuffle for space to run stretched out the field early. I found myself a nice pocket to run in, and remained there the whole race.

The temperature was pleasant at first, but, by the halfway stage, it was beginning to get a little much.

Everyone kept pushing forward though, which in-turn spurred me on.

I ran with a makeshift, informal, running group, who had a steady pace to them. As we passed the three mile checkpoint, we began to spread out even more. Soon, I was near enough running alone.

At the front, a titanic battle was taking place between the frontrunners - twenty minutes or so further back down the road, another titanic battle was occurring; my legs versus running up-hill. In the end, I, and several others, decided to walk it. In retrospect, this was a very wise decision.

By mile four, I was very tired, but the prospect of finishing kept my legs moving forward. It helped that there were so many people encouraging and cheering us all along. As I'm sure anyone who has run a road race will attest, it feels like you're at the Olympics when people are cheering you home like that. Finally, after forty-seven minutes, I crossed the finish line, and was relieved, proud and well and truly exhausted!

A medal (or glass) proved a good prize, but was beaten by the tasty array of homemade baked goods provided by some of our lovely runners.

As someone who hasn't run regularly for a few years, it has felt so good to be back at it, and this road race was such a positive experience.

Each entry contributed towards a donation to the Andover Food Bank, which was yet another wonderful facet of the event, which had a fun, family atmosphere all day. It was so enjoyable to see so many friends and families attending, including plenty of kids, who seemed to have a lot of fun! For those supporting, there was plenty of food and drink to go around - another plus on a day full of positivity. I also want to give a quick mention to my mum; Anjella, who ran the race with myself and our fellow PJC members while injured, but impressively made it to the finish line, and even took the time to smile and pose as she approached the end!

Ridley Coote



Two Whole Club Events

The Last Run
Along The
Seafront
from the D-Day
Museum to Old
Portsmouth, as
that part of the
seafront will be
closed for at
least 18 months
now, for sea
defence work.



This was a lovely, whole club run, organised by Tony Conway. We were followed by a drone! The speedy runners looped back or waited for us slower ones to catch up, so everyone stayed together. There was a lovely friendly atmosphere throughout. After the run those who wished to repaired to a local pub for refreshments. **Huge Thank You to Tony for organising this!!!!** **Celia – Ed.**



Whole Club Act of Remembrance Led by Tony Conway.

Tony led us in a lovely act of Remembrance and 2 minute silence at Christ Church at the top of Portsdown Hill, where we stood among the Commonwealth War Graves. Tony told us the stories of some of those people.

Afterwards all the groups went off for a short run before returning the The George Inn, where some enjoyed some refreshments.

Again a Huge Thank You to Tony for organising this!!! **Celia -Ed**



**The Next Club Event will be the Mince Pie run
on Thursday 19th December at Lakeside, 7.00**

Portsmouth Joggers in the Community

Donation to Portsmouth Cycling Without Age.

Hi Team,

As some of you know Bob and I volunteer as Pilots for **Cycling Without Age**, a local charity offering FREE rides in Portsmouth, Southsea and Hayling Island, to socially isolated people. We were absolutely blown away when we read the last newsletter to find that we were to receive a cheque for £850! for this wonderful charity. Monies gathered from you lovely folks from the Summer XC.

The You Trust cycling without age team were thrilled to bits with this kind and generous donation and we'd All of us just like to say THANK YOU, YOU LOVELY PEOPLE.

A special mention goes to Ally Smith , Sue Clarke and Tony Quinn for nominating us.

Happy Running All

Deb and Bob



Donation to Runr, Medals for Kids Campaign

On September 12th I dropped off 100s of old PJC race medals 🏅 with Runr, to support their Medals for Kids campaign. These will be used to encourage kids to be active and, really nicely, I've been told that our medals will be staying local and going to schools in the Portsmouth area. It's great to think that our old medals will be getting a new lease of life and making a difference 💙

Kate Lewis



That's all for now folks – Enjoy ! – Celia