



## Meet Christine and Kathy

Hi there,

We're Christine and Kathy we lead Irchester and Wollaston joggers and we like to joke that we're the slowest Jog Northants leaders!

I didn't start running until my 50s, when I found that brisk walking didn't get me out of breath anymore, so I started running for a few yards now and then. Most of the running plans I found started on the basis of run for one minute to start with - I could only manage about 30 seconds, but it felt great.

I started the group in 2013 and Christine was among my first recruits. I felt very scared at the run leader's training, everyone else was much fitter and more experienced than me, but the leaders and the other participants were really supportive. They were keen to recruit leaders who wouldn't put off newcomers by being scarily athletic - and we're certainly not that! Our job as run leaders is all about being supportive and making it fun and inclusive for all abilities.

Christine took over the group at short notice when I was diagnosed with cancer in 2014 and we've worked as a double act ever since I returned to the group, hoping to regain my fitness as I worked with the new runners. I found returning to running helped not just my physical fitness, but made a huge difference to my mental wellbeing.

We are both keen to encourage people who have never run, think they can't run or that they wouldn't enjoy to come along and give it a try. Some of our runners who started unable to run for more than 10 seconds have built up to completing the London Marathon. Others simply enjoy coming along to get fitter and enjoy a social run with others.

We find that many people new to running need longer to reach being able to run 5K nonstop than the usual 'couch to 5K' but that doesn't matter; our favourite quote is "You're still lapping the person on the couch!"

