LM24 participant press release example – bereaved by suicide

Notes – update any ‘X’s with relevant information, **AND** make sure you **delete** the comments before sending this to your local media

**For immediate release**
X

**School teacher prepares to run London Marathon for Samaritans in memory of brother**

A schoolteacher from Middlesbrough is a month away from running the 2024 TCS London Marathon in memory of her brother who died by suicide.

Susie Whelan, 38, is taking on the challenge in support of Samaritans, who are the 2024 TCS London Marathon Charity of the Year, helping to ensure its volunteers are able to continue providing emotional support.

Susie’s younger brother Liam sadly took his own life three years ago, aged 32.

**Looking ahead to marathon day, Susie said:** “I’m a bit nervous, but at the same time I absolutely cannot wait. I’m sure it’ll be a very emotional yet special day. My mum and cousins will be along the route cheering me on.

“Liam was a really keen runner, he did numerous marathons including London, so it seemed like the perfect way to remember him.

“His death was unbelievably difficult; you never get over something like that. We were very close.

“I don’t know if he ever contacted Samaritans, I hope he did because no one should ever have to feel like they’re facing their problems alone. That’s why I’m so determined to raise as much as I can.”

All the money raised by Susie will help Samaritans train more volunteers and help the charity keep its helpline open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

Volunteers across the UK and Republic of Ireland spent over one million hours responding to calls for help last year and continue to be there around the clock for anyone who needs a listening ear, helping them believe in tomorrow.

Next Saturday (X), Susie is hosting a bake sale fundraiser at Faversham Town Hall, 10am-1pm, with a selection of goods kindly donated by O’Neill’s Bakery and homemade tasty treats of offer.

**Susie continued:** “I’ve hosted a couple of fundraising quiz nights, and an auction of promises at the school Christmas Fair. So far, I’ve raised £3,400 but would love to reach £5,000 if possible. For once, I’m being greedy – but for a good cause!

“Reaching my target would mean funding the equivalent of 1,000 calls, helping people who are currently finding life hard, like Liam was, is so motivational. Everyone has been so supportive, it’s been incredible.”

Having started training back in December, Susie has been busy doing training runs before starting work, braving the treacherous winter weather conditions.

“Some days it has been a real challenge to get up and out the door, especially when it was sleeting, but overall training has gone well. I’ve had a few niggles but nothing too serious – touch wood. I just can’t wait for the day itself now.”

To support Susie and donate, visit her Enthuse fundraising page here.

**Ends**

For more information, photos, or to arrange an interview, please contact X

**About Samaritans:**

* Samaritans is the official Charity of the Year for the 2024 TCS London Marathon.
* Participants will take to the streets of London and across the nation for the 2024 TCS London Marathon on Sunday 21 April. To get involved and show you believe in tomorrow and find out more about the Charity Partner of the Year partnership, visit <https://www.samaritans.org/tcs-london-marathon-2024/>
* Anyone can contact Samaritans FREE any time from any phone on 116 123, even a mobile without credit. This number won’t show up on your phone bill. Or you can visit [www.samaritans.org](http://www.samaritans.org   )
* Every 10 seconds, Samaritans responds to a call for help.
* Samaritans is a charity and it’s the public’s kind donations and 23,000 volunteers that mean we are always there for anyone struggling to cope. Find out how you can [support us](http://www.samaritans.org/supportus) or [volunteer with us](https://volunteer.samaritans.org/volunteer).
* You can follow Samaritans on social media on [Twitter](https://twitter.com/samaritans), [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/samaritanscharity/) and [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/samaritanscharity/).