

SUPPORT FOR ATHLETES WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES

Athletes with learning disabilities hoping to put Brighton on the sporting map have received a welcome boost thanks to the efforts of fundraisers.

So far around £2,000 has been raised for the Brighton and Hove Special Olympics team who will be competing in this year's Special Olympics GB Summer Games in Leicester.

The games will see around 2,700 athletes representing 19 Special Olympics regions across the UK and Grace Eyre – a Brighton-based charity that provides a wide range of help and support to adults with learning disabilities – has helped Brighton & Hove Special Olympics put together a team of talented sportsmen and women.

They will be competing in a number of events including swimming, power lifting, 10-pin bowls, indoor bowls, golf and football but need to raise funds to buy essential equipment and kit as well as covering transport costs.

The biggest contribution so far has been made by Saskia Ton, operations manager at Brighton and Hove City Council, who raised around £1,200 by competing in the recent London Marathon.

Saskia, who finished with a personal best time of 4 hours, 7 minutes and 50 seconds, said: "I was aware of the good work that Grace Eyre does and its athletes are great ambassadors for the charity and so I decided they should benefit from my efforts in the Marathon.

"The whole day was an amazing experience and when the going got tough, the thought of supporting the Special Olympics athletes pushed me through.

"It has been an absolute pleasure and privilege to raise money for such a worthy cause and I would like to thank everyone who sponsored me during the event," she added.

Commented Grace Eyre Director Eva Jarvis: "We are grateful for all the support we have received in the run up to the Special Olympics, and Saska's efforts in the London Marathon proved a real boost for the team.

"As well as providing obvious health benefits, active participation in sport helps our service users to develop greater independence and self esteem. In order for our athletes to really fulfil their potential we would welcome any further support that can be provided by local businesses and individuals," she added.

Contacts

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