

Local workers power towards a brighter future for the NSPCC

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Opus Energy colleagues in Oxford and Northampton pushed themselves to the limit by running the New York Marathon and raising over £3,500

Two colleagues from Opus Energy, a leading independent electricity supplier to businesses based in Oxford and Northampton, powered their way through the New York Marathon last month raising over £3,500 for the NSPCC.

Mo Fillmore, from Crowmarsh Gifford near Oxford, and Penny Beard, from West Hunsbury in Northampton, braved the elements to complete the tough course. Their impressive efforts were part of Opus Energy's pledge to raise £10,000 for the NSPCC by April 2008. The amount raised by Opus so far now sits at £6,228.

Mo, who works as a PA at Opus Energy's headquarters in Oxford, has completed three marathons before but said this was by far the toughest. However, despite the harsh weather conditions she still managed to beat her personal best time and completed the course in 4 hours and 38 minutes.

"The day before the race was freezing cold and incredibly windy," said Mo, "I'd done a lot of training but halfway through the marathon I wasn't where I wanted to be time-wise. I gave myself a good talking to and somehow manage to find some energy from somewhere and shaved 15 seconds off my personal best.

"The crowd definitely helped - they were amazing. It was definitely worth it as it's such a great cause and I've made monthly donations to the charity for as long as I can remember".

For Penny, a credit controller at Opus Energy's Northampton office, it was her first marathon and therefore quite an experience for her.

"It was all very emotional. No-one tells you how tough the New York Marathon is because they don't want to disparage you, but the pavements are very hard and it is surprisingly hilly too. I am relieved it is over but it's for a very good cause. I'm a step-mother so I can understand how important the work of the NSPCC is."

Opus will continue to work towards its £10,000 pledge by holding its annual Christmas raffle in aid of NSPCC. Last year, the raffle raised over £2,000. This year Opus is hoping to beat this with even better prizes having already been donated, including

a signed Chelsea shirt and a pampering day at Whittlebury Hall, in Northamptonshire.

Charlie Crossley-Cooke, CEO of Opus Energy is the driving force behind the company's donations to NSPCC. Charlie visited the local Northampton NSPCC centres following Opus Energy's first donation in 2007 and was compelled to continue supporting the children's charity going into 2008.

He said, "It is very important to me that Opus Energy continues to support the NSPCC both nationally and locally. It was a moving experience to view the work that is undertaken by the charity on a daily basis at a local level. I sincerely hope that Opus Energy and the commendable efforts of our employees are able to raise funds that will make a real difference in helping put a stop to child cruelty".

Jenni Cowlshaw, NSPCC Community Corporate Manager, said: "I would like to thank Penny and Mo for completing the marathon for the NSPCC as it took a lot of hard work and dedication from them both. It is arguably the hardest marathon to tackle and they both did a fantastic job and raised much-needed money for the charity.

"Everyone at Opus Energy has been brilliant and all the staff have really got behind supporting us. They are a great example of how local people can make a real difference to the lives of children.

"Because 87 per cent of NSPCC funding comes from voluntary donations and fundraising, the NSPCC's work is heavily reliant on the generosity of the general public. Costs and workloads are rising all the time and we urgently need more fundraisers in the county to help keep our services going."

Opus Energy
1st Floor, Beaver House
23-38 Hythe Bridge Street
Oxford
OX1 2EP

Kerry Poulter
Marketing Specialist
01865 264726
kerry.poulter@opusenergy.com

About Opus Energy

Opus Energy is a leading independent supplier of electricity to UK businesses, based in Oxford and Northampton. It has over 40,000 customers across the country, including Yell Group, Disney Shop, Thornton's, Farm Foods and Deloitte & Touche. Opus offers companies best-price electricity together with tailored customer care. Its flexible, tailor-made solutions suit businesses across the SME and larger corporate market.

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