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Women Can Marathon becomes First UK Partner Event for 261 Fearless®

The **Women Can Marathon** in Tipton St John, Devon, on 28 May 2017 has been named the first UK partner event for **261 Fearless**, Inc, a global non-profit social women's running movement founded by women's running legend Kathrine Switzer.

261 Fearless® brings active women together through a supportive global community. It allows fearless women to pass strength gained from running to other women who are facing challenges, sparking a revolution of empowerment. Women are running together in local 261 Clubs all over the world, communicating on a dynamic online platform and joining events together - uniting under the symbol 261. Currently there are three established 261 Clubs in the UK, more are coming soon.

The number 261 was Kathrine's bib number from the 1967 Boston Marathon where she was physically attacked by the race co-director, for officially registering and running in what was then considered a men-only race. She went on to complete the race and has since spent decades working as a champion and advocate for women's running. April 2017 is the 50th anniversary of her historic run and she will be lining up on the start line in Boston once again to mark the occasion, alongside a large team of women from her 261 Fearless® movement.

The Women Can Marathon was inspired by Kathrine's story. The race organisers wanted to honour her achievements and create an inclusive running event for all women, to celebrate that Women Can run. The 50th anniversary of Kathrine's historic run co-incides with the 50th anniversary of the establishment of the community owned playing field in Tipton St John. 1967 was therefore the foundation of outdoor sport in this East Devon village. To mark these two occasions this exciting new running event for women has been launched.

"Events such as the Women Can Marathon and 261 Fearless® are changing women's lives," Switzer said. "I want to thank the Women Can organisers so sincerely for honouring me at this first event."

The inaugural Women Can marathon will be held on Sunday 28 May 2017. It starts and finishes on the community playing field in Tipton St John. The course is almost entirely off road and travels through Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty in East Devon and part of the South West Coast Path on the Jurassic World Heritage Site. The event is also open to Nordic walkers and teams of runners too. Around 200 women have so far signed up to take part and organisers hope to reach the 300 target.



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Race administrator Jo Earlam from Tipton St John first came up with the idea of the Women Can marathon and enlisted friends Pauline Beare and Peggy Wiseman to help organise it. She's delighted that the event has become the first UK partner event of 261 Fearless:

“What Kathrine Switzer has achieved for women’s endurance running is truly remarkable. As a keen marathon runner, I thought what better way of celebrating her legacy than further empowering more women to run a marathon. We’re thrilled to be joining forces with 261 Fearless, and honoured to have Kathrine’s personal backing for this unique and special event.”

Jo added: “It's a challenging route, not a course to be thinking about doing a PB, but that's not what this marathon is about. It's about being part of it, enjoying the course and the company.”

For more information about Women Can Marathon and to sign up, visit www.womencan.co.uk

About Kathrine Switzer

Iconic athlete, sports and social advocate, author, and Emmy award-winning television commentator, Kathrine Switzer was the first woman to officially enter and run the Boston Marathon. She has been honoured widely for her achievements, most recently being inducted into the USA National Women’s Hall of Fame for creating positive social change. The ramifications of this work are both joyful and profound, changing forever the face of sports, health, and opportunities for women around the world and fearlessly empowering millions beyond the finish line, through non-profit 261 Fearless Inc.

About 261 Fearless, Inc.

261 Fearless, Inc. is a global non-profit organization founded by pioneer runner, Kathrine Switzer. 261 Fearless® uses running as a vehicle to empower and unite women globally through the creation of clubs, education opportunities, a communication platform, merchandising and events. Through these networking opportunities, 261 Fearless® breaks down the barriers of geography and creates a global community for women runners of all abilities to support and talk to each other, encouraging healthy living and a positive sense of self and fearlessness. For more information, please visit, www.261fearless.org.

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