

*Ludwell Valley Park is a slither of green hidden between Rifford Road and Pynes Hill in Exeter. What it also hides are babbling brooks, angry grazing cows and a couple of beastly hills. Running there for years we have always talked about setting up an event that gives everyone a chance of winning. Running races can be lonely affairs so we tested a race with difference, one where everyone finished rather than started together. We introduced a handicap system meaning the slowest start first and the fastest start last and catch them. On the evening of Thursday 9th August 2018 we opened up our race to the public in order to raise money for Cancer Research UK.*

*The course started with a meandering downhill stretch and flat running in the valley floor. Entrants set out one by one according to the time they had previously submitted, the fastest runner faced being released over 18 minutes behind the first. Just over halfway the easy hills abruptly end, crossing Ludwell Lane entrants were faced with what has come to be known as 'Mount Sloggit', a lung busting hill that looks more like a Dartmoor Tor. As some entrants were reduced to walking pace the field behind started to catch up. Another hill (yet to be named) tested runner's resolve and stretched hamstrings. After this however it was downhill to the finish. First to appear over the brow of the hill was Ian Sanders of AWW Architects followed by Chris Edwards of the Blue Grass Group. Chris overtook 13 people to finish in second place. In third was Tom Broome of Services Design Solutions (SDS) who climbed nine places. A steady stream of runners, closely bunched, continued to pour over the hill with the handicap system bringing them to finish in quick succession. The top three each received a bottle of Moet and Chandon Nectar Imperial Demi Sec kindly donated by Alder King.*

*Our special thanks go to our other sponsors and supporters: ITEC for printing, Willmott Dixon for donating our barriers, Michelmores for their help and advice and SDS for putting forward such a strong set of athletes and supporters. A special thank you to the volunteers and Corporate Social Responsibility team at Mott MacDonald who worked hard to show how we can make a difference to the communities we work in.*

*Representing Cancer Research UK at the event Gillian, on behalf of the local fundraising manager, received a donation of £500 which will go towards researching and beating cancer.*