

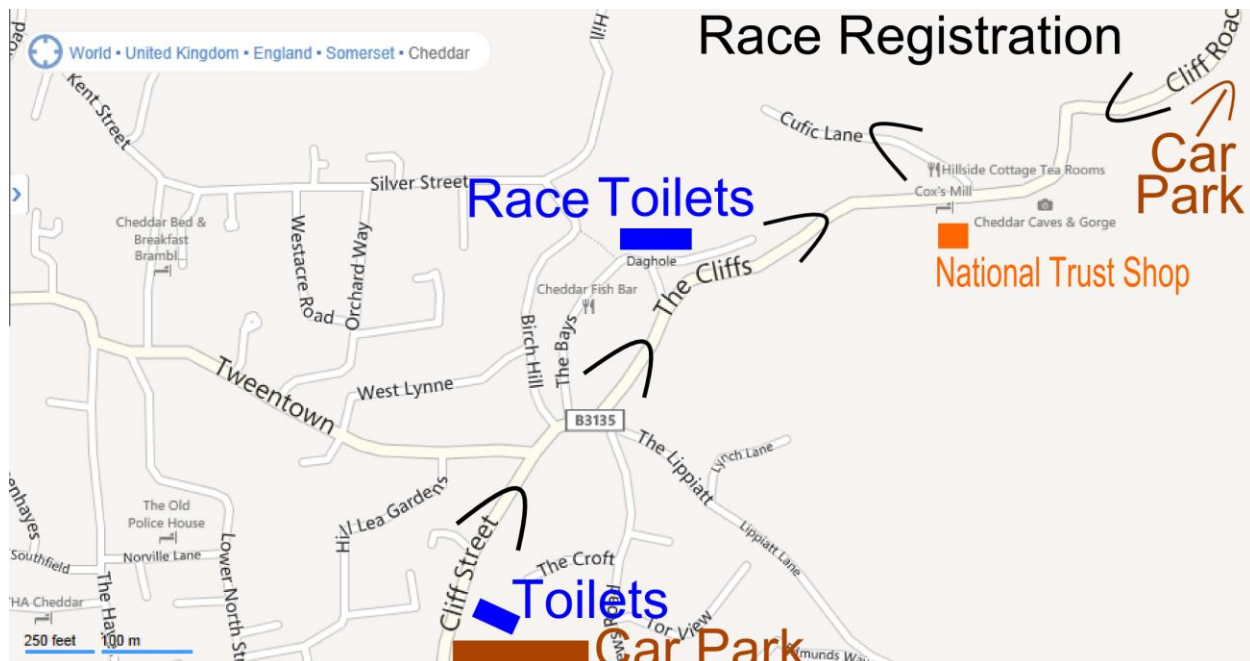
Cheddar Gorge Half Marathon & Marathon Information

9th September Event Information
Strawberry Fields, The Cliffs, Cheddar, BS27 3QE



Car Parking

There is limited parking in Cheddar and all car parks are a 10min+ walk from registration so please leave plenty of time. Note there is strictly no parking on Cufic Lane as it is a single track road and needs to be kept free for emergency access at all times. Roads in Cheddar can be busy so be mindful of the traffic. Car Parks can be found at the following places;



*** The best place to park is on Cliff Street; it is slightly cheaper and uses a Pay & Display machine. When parking on Cliff Road you need to pay an attendant or at Cheddar Gorge Caves which don't open until 10am ***

Cliff Street Pay & Display car park

150 spaces
6 free spaces for holders of disabled badges
6 free spaces for motorbikes
Separate summer and winter tariffs operate
Location: Cliff Street - at the mini-roundabout at the bottom of the Gorge

Cheddar Gorge & Caves

50 spaces

Location: at Lakeside where our Gorge Tour Bus starts

Free all year round to purchasers of a Gorge & Caves Explorer ticket

50 spaces

Location: opposite Cox's Cave

Free from end of Oct half term to beginning of Feb half term

During the rest of year, tickets can be purchased from the uniformed attendant, the cashier at Gough's Cave entrance or in our Collectors of Fantasy shop

300 spaces

Location: beyond Gough's Cave on both sides of the Gorge

Free from end Oct half term to beginning of Feb half term

During rest of year, tickets can be purchased from the uniformed attendant or from the cashier at Gough's Cave

Toilets

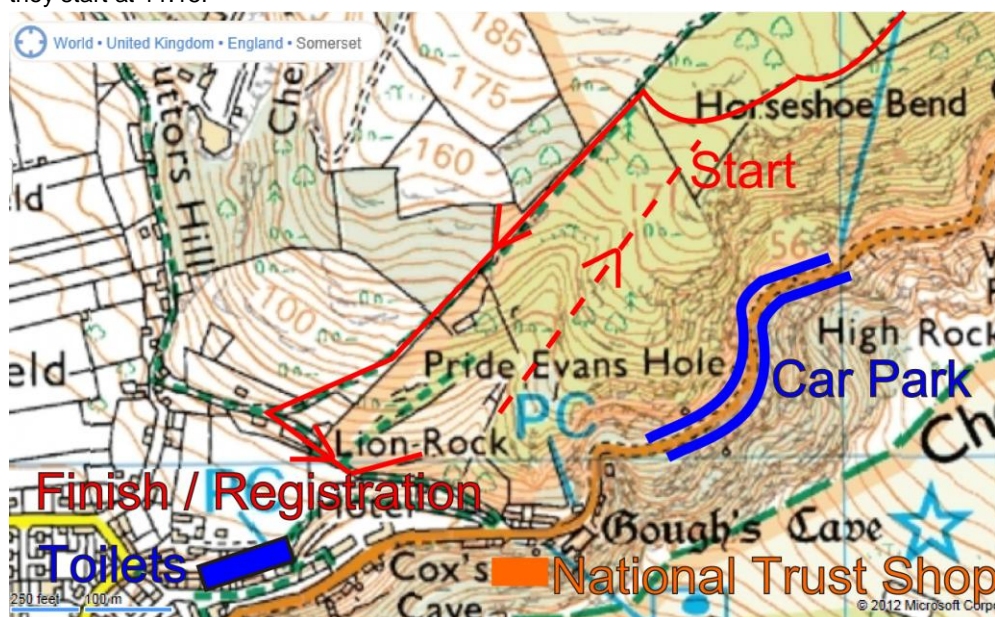
The race toilets are the public toilets marked on the map above at Dag's Hole. They are a short 2 min walk from race registration. Please note there are no toilets at the race start, at the top of the Gorge. There are also public toilets at Cliff Street car park.

Wheelchair / Push Chair Access

Wheelchair or push chair access to the registration area will be difficult due to the challenging nature of the terrain. If you are coming to enjoy the race we recommend carrying on along Cufic Lane to the far end (beyond the signs and steps at the near end of the field) to a gated access at the top of the lane. We regret that it will not be possible to take wheelchairs or push chairs to the top of the gorge to watch the start of the race due to the very steep nature of the terrain.

Registration

Registration and number collection opens at 09:30 until 10:40 (10:45 at the absolute latest!). The location is in the middle of Strawberry Fields and accessed via Cufic Lane. The start is an 800m walk from registration and is up a very steep and challenging hill. The final call to the start will be made at 10:45. If you arrive at registration after this time then you may be arriving at the start a little short of breath! Not runners for the 10km event may still be registering but they start at 11:15!



Start

Please note there are multiple races happening during the day so please pay attention to your race colour and number

5km Numbers

10km Numbers 401+ (Orange)

Half Marathon Numbers 201-400 (Green)

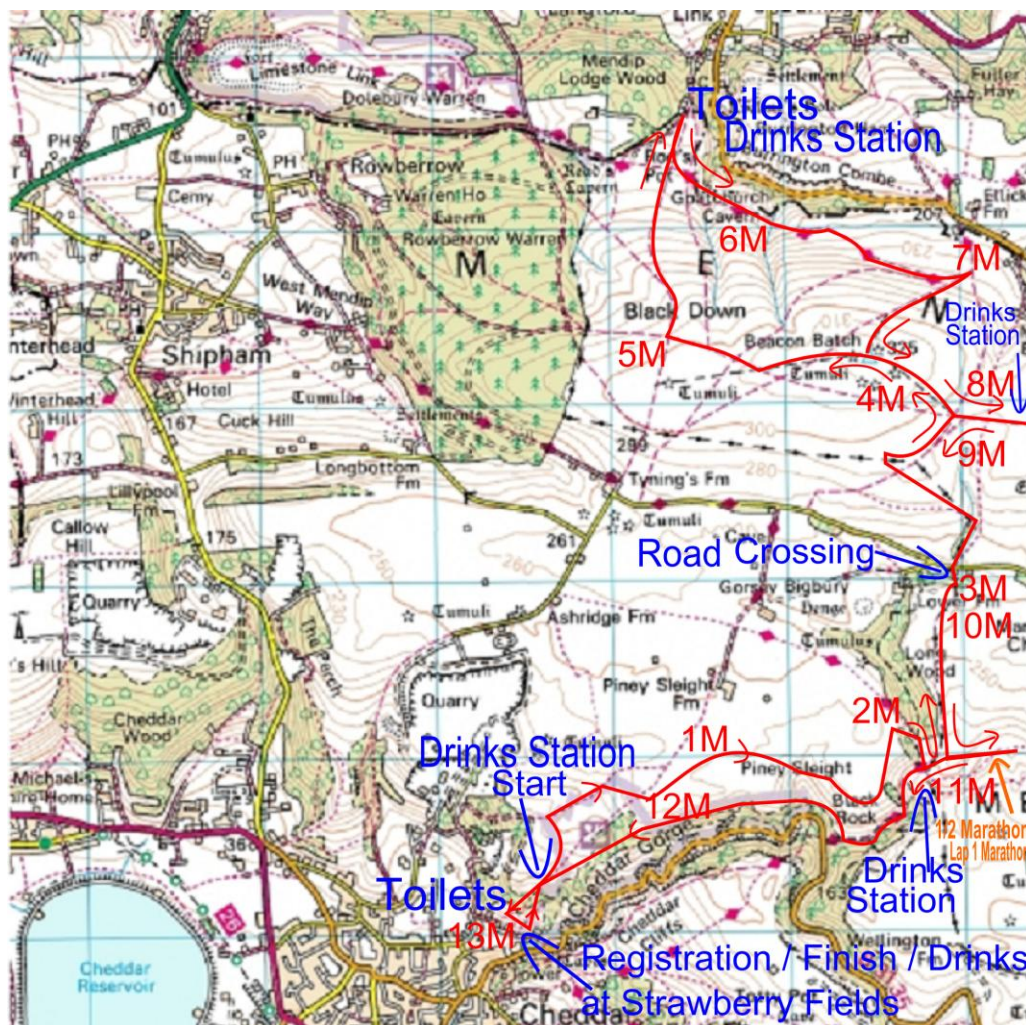
Marathon Numbers 26-200 (Purple)

Challenge Numbers 1-25 (Blue)

The race start is located at the top of the gorge. Please note there are no toilets at the start. Race briefing will take place 5 minutes before each race. Please note there is a marathon, half marathon, 10km and 5km taking place during the day so please listen carefully. **The half marathon will start at 11:00 and the marathon at 11:05**

Course Description

The course makes use of public footpaths and permissive rights of way. *Please be mindful of others users and give them a friendly shout when you approach and be careful when taking tight corners.* The route is marked with fluorescent signs, red and white barrier tape and hazards with white paint.



1 Mile

The first 1km carries on uphill (we couldn't let you get away with only walking to the top!) but there are some fantastic views if you look over to the right hand side. The 1km point comes at the entrance to the Piney Sleigh field. This is a flat section through open fields. Follow the lines and paths cut into the grass.

1 Mile – 2 Miles

There is a sudden rocky section on a slight downhill just after the 2km point. *** Runners of the 10km, half marathon and marathon will carry straight on up the other side of the valley. The athletes racing the 5km make a right hand turn downhill. Look out for the signs.* ** Another flat section and downhill are to come with a couple of stiles to negotiate. There is a downhill run down to the 3km mark which could be slippery if wet.

2 Miles – 3 Miles

Make a left hand turn past the first drinks station into Velvet Bottom. After 50m the half marathon and marathon race will turn left (marathon runners follow half marathon signs) and the 10km race goes straight on. There are 4 fields to cross, all heading due North. After the fields is a small muddy and wooded section which will be slippery.

3 Miles – 4 Miles ** Road Crossing **

Immediately after the 3 miles sign is a road crossing which is open to traffic. Please do not wear personal music players as you need to be able to hear the traffic. There is a marshalled crossing but the final decision to cross the road is yours alone. After emerging onto the road, make a right hand turn and cross over the road after 20m.

The course now runs through a technical valley with a small river crossing and then run up the other side. Climbing out the other side through open fields, keep a look out for the next landmark, a WWII Bunker on the horizon. After the bunker is a marked change of terrain, it will now become very boggy for 200m – even the most stable looking ground may deceive you! Pick your best line across the bog (there is a small path tight against the perimeter path may be your best bet, but feel free to pick your own path) Make sure your shoes are done up tight!

4 Miles – 5 Miles

After negotiating the bog, make a left hand turn and head up to Beacon Batch, the highest point on the Mendip Hills. Enjoy the views. Over to your left you will see the starting point at Cheddar Gorge as well as the Bristol Channel, Wales and everything around with this fantastic 360 degree vantage point. Keep left of the trig point and follow some flat paths along the top of the hill.

5 Miles – 6 Miles

Make a right hand turn down what is known at the Motorway, but is nowadays very much free of traffic. This 20m wide 'road' was the Roman path over the Mendip Hills, and as such, makes few deviations and will be a 1 km straight down descent down to the far side of the hills. There is now a 200m out and back section to reach the next Feed Station and there are also 2 Portaloos at this feed station. Retrace your steps back to the cross roads and make a left

6 Miles – 7 Miles

Probably the flattest mile of the race, enjoy some quite woodland paths including two brook crossings.

7 Miles to 8 Miles

Time to climb once again as runners head back to Beacon Batch, with some more great views to the right hand side over towards the Bristol Channel. Make a left at Beacon Batch and head towards the radio masts in the distance.

8 Miles to 9 Miles

This is an out and back section along a path which is narrow in places. More treats at the feed station await by the radio masts.

9 Miles to 10 Miles ** Road Crossing **

It is now time to negotiate the bog once again, I hope you marked your path well on your earlier crossing...Back across Blue Bell Valley and safely across the road.

10 Miles to 11 Miles

Retrace your steps back towards Velvet Bottom. Half Marathon Runners and Marathon Runners on Lap 1 make a left turn here and complete a short out and back section along Velvet Bottom. You will now pass an earlier Feed Station and make a left hand turn along Black Rock.

11 Miles to 12 Miles

Save some energy for this challenging section. Peel off right up a rocky climb before climbing up one or two steps.... This is a flat section along the cliff side of the gorge with great views to the far side.

12 Miles to 13 Miles

There are some narrow sections ahead but there are a few opportunities to overtake. The 9km point takes you past the race start area and represents the last place to overtake for a while. There is another feed station at the top of the gorge before the descent. Enjoy the long 850m downhill to the bottom of Cheddar Gorge. This is a narrow path but there are a couple of opportunities to pass where the path splits, both routes are of equal length. The final 150m is through Strawberry Fields to the registration point.

There are 2 Portaloos here again just off the course, these are intended to be used by Marathon runners who are still mid race. There are toilets in town, about 300m from the registration point, for runners who have finished and for spectators.

Finish

Finishers of the half marathon make a left hand turn to the finish shoot. Marathon runners carry on past another Feed Station and head back up the climb to the start point.

**** Marathon Route ****

Complete the lap again, but without the out and back section along Velvet Bottom. Runners follow Half Marathon direction arrows at all points other than 2 Marathon signs at this point.

Prizes

There will be winner's prizes for the half marathon, top 3 male and female athletes, which will be awarded as the finishers cross the line. There are overall prizes for the Marathon race in form of top 3 overall plus 1 prize per age group; Junior (U20), 40-49, 50-59, 60+. We will give out as many prizes as possible as people cross the line but will post any remaining prizes.

**** Challenge Runners ****

All athletes who have completed the Cheddar Gorge Challenge; 10km, half marathon and marathon over the course of the summer, make sure you make yourself known at the Post Race area to collect your trophy.

We do hope that you will bring a picnic and stay and enjoy the fantastic views, and if you have any energy left you can always take your family and friends back to the top of the gorge to see the great panoramic views.

Hot Drinks

The Daily Espresso bar will be serving fresh coffee, tea and assorted treats from their mobile bar to the left hand side of the registration area, about 50m down the side of the hill.

Photography

Event Pictures will be available to purchase from the official race photographer at www.MarathonPicture.com

Important Health & Safety

Whenever you are out in the countryside you need to be mindful of ticks and the risk of Lyme Disease. Only a small proportion of ticks carry Lyme Disease but it is important to be aware of what action to take and the symptoms that may present;

- Remove any ticks immediately.
- Target / bullseye shaped rash may appear around the site of the bite.
- If you come down with flu like symptoms up to 4 weeks later, report to a doctor.

