

These train drivers are maxing out in a good cause

GTR DRIVERS Helen Biggs and John Doyle have raised almost £1,000 for charity so far as they compete in a series of endurance races.

Helen, who is a driver with Thameslink, and John, who is with Southern, are pounding the streets for the Max Appeal charity linked to the rare genetic condition DiGeorge Syndrome. They were inspired to take up the cause as a fellow driver's son is a sufferer.

Both drivers took on the Great North Run in Newcastle and John ran the Winchester half-marathon before Helen completes the series with the 10km Great South Run in Portsmouth this month.

Govia Thameslink Railway has made a donation to Max Appeal, which supports the families of sufferers of DiGeorge Syndrome, also called 22q11.2 deletion syndrome. Despite not being widely known, this syndrome affects an estimated one in 4,000 people and can cause life-long physical and mental problems.

Helen, 32, lives in Brighton and has been a driver on Thameslink since 2008. She said: "I chose to support Max Appeal as I know they do really important work to help the families affected by 22q. As a small charity, every penny raised and every conversation that raises awareness goes such a long way."

John, 55, from Merstham in Surrey, is based at Epsom and has been a driver since 1988. He said: "I've sup-

Southern driver John and Thameslink driver Helen



ported Max Appeal since another driver, Mark Tripp, invited me to run the Great North Run in 2016 on their behalf. Looking into their aims I found they are not very well known compared with the main charities everyone hears about. Having met people who are either directly or indirectly affected by 22q I can see the benefits of the wonderful work they do, and I jumped at the chance of a second opportunity to raise their profile this year."



Helen celebrates after another energetic day

