

Press Release: Ivanhoe Way Challenge 2015, raises over £11,000

Date: 20th June 2015

The 7th annual Ivanhoe Way Challenge, a 37 mile walk around the Ivanhoe Way Footpath, took place on Saturday 20th June, 2015, raising much needed funds for Wishes 4 Kids. Starting at 4:30am from Ashby, 60 walkers were in good spirits, even though they had 37 gruelling miles in front of them. Constant drizzle and rain showers throughout the day tested the walkers to their limits. With an additional checkpoint this year manned by Ashby Rotary, walkers really appreciated the 'fuel stops' helping them on their way.

The route passes through Staunton Harold Reservoir, heads to the rocky outcrops of Charnwood Forest, before going out towards Bagworth and Odstone. The second half of the route continues over to Shackerstone, along the route of the Ashby Canal, then towards the Moria Furnace. On reaching the infamous checkpoint 4 where tea, coffee and homemade cakes are on offer, the day started to brighten with odd spells of sunshine, however the rain was never far away. Whilst some walkers took time out for a cuppa, Sports Physio Gemma Chatwin and Leicestershire Search and Rescue were doing a great job attending to aching muscles and blistered feet which helped to prepare walkers for the final 12 miles.

As walkers approached each checkpoint they were welcomed by encouraging support from the marshals, with many stories being shared about people's goals and motivations for taking part in the challenge, many very emotional and inspiring. One common theme we heard from many people was the good cause for which the event supported, Wishes 4 Kids. Completing his 4th Ivanhoe Way Challenge, David Flanagan sums the day up nicely, "Despite some very wet conditions, heavy rain and a few blisters! We had an absolutely fantastic day, the sense of achievement at the end is incredible and worth every ounce of effort knowing it's all for the kids"

The amount raised for this year's challenge is over £11,000 which is amazing, and this keeps on rising. This brings the total raised over the 7 years of this event in excess of £43,000, with over 350 people completing the challenge. The true winners of this challenge were all the participants and the children who will benefit from all the money they have raised. Despite having blisters, aches and pains, walkers

enjoyed a warm welcome and a well-earned rest at the Ivanhoe Social Club with homemade soup and refreshments once they had completed the walk. A great atmosphere of celebration, elation and relief welcomed each team back, and continued until the last team finished.

Special thanks must go to all the volunteers who helped out on the day, Gemma Chatwin who provided Sports Physio and Leicester Search and Rescue who provided the first aid cover. Co-founder of the challenge Angela Bebbington says "The sheer grit and determination of people taking part in this event never ceases to amaze us. Special thanks to all who took part and all the amazing volunteers who helped on the day. Without volunteers this event would not be able to take place, they all play such an important role in making the whole event a success". Many walkers commented on how great the support was at checkpoints with constant cheers of encouragement from marshals, really giving them a push and motivating them to keep going.

Richard and Angela Bebbington, the founders of this event, continue to support Wishes 4 Kids. In April 2016 they will be completing yet another challenge, running 4 marathons in 4 weeks (Paris, Manchester, Brighton and London), raising further funds for Wishes 4 Kids. A Leicestershire charity that grants wishes for children and youngsters who are life limited, terminally ill, have experienced life-changing physical or emotional traumas, have suffered major abuse or are diagnosed as HIV Positive.

Further information:

www.ivanhoechallenge.co.uk

www.wishes4kids.co.uk

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