



Press Release

Immediate Release

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Derbyshire Care Staff Complete Three Peaks Challenge for Children's Charity

Staff at a care service for women in Derbyshire have successfully tackled the Yorkshire Three Peaks Challenge in their fundraising efforts for a local charity which supports children with learning disabilities.

Care workers from Cygnet Views have been raising money throughout 2024 for Footprints Conductive Education Centre after finding out how much the charity helped the son of two co-workers who has Down Syndrome.

The Cygnet Health Care service, on Wellington Street, Matlock, is a 10 bed high dependency complex care service for women with learning disabilities. The team has so far raised more than £5,000 for the local Nottinghamshire charity that supports children with mobility and communication difficulties and their families.

Melissa Fox is a Team Leader at Cygnet Views and her partner, Lyndsey Fox, is the Regional Safety Intervention Trainer for Cygnet Health Care. Together, they have two-year-old Archie, who has Down Syndrome. The family have been supported by Footprints for over a year. During this time, he has met lots of developmental milestones, made friends, and his Mums have had the opportunity to network with other families with similar needs.

Footprints offers a holistic education approach to help children with disabilities consciously learn the life skills that come more naturally to others. They encourage the development of physical, communication, social, sensory, self-help and thinking skills, such as sitting, standing, touching, listening, looking, eating and playing.

Lyndsey explained: "Footprints is an incredible charity that gives us so much hope.

"We have used Footprints for the last year, our son attends every week. For us as a family it has provided us with opportunities to meet other families and for Archie to develop his confidence in a variety of social settings exploring different activities.

"We have learnt Makaton and continue to learn to support Archie's early communication so he can express his needs.

"Since Archie was 12 weeks he has been in the swimming pool learning basic water safety and foundation skills to swim, he loves to be in the water and has strong

kicking legs. Swimming lessons have been provided by Footprints which will be a valuable life skill."

The latest fundraising efforts saw four Cygnet Views staff successfully complete the Yorkshire Three Peaks Challenge walk.

The challenging 24 mile circular route includes the peaks of Pen-y-Ghent, Whernside and Ingleborough. The tough challenge walk was undertaken by Abi Hague (Ward Manager), Jonny Billing (Staff Nurse), Antony Carroll (Support Worker) and Daisy Richardson (Support Worker). They were aided by a support team who met them at various points on the walk to provide much needed refreshment and encouragement.

Abi explained: "I felt nervous at the beginning of the walk, as I realised that the Yorkshire Three Peaks is a huge challenge and was worried I wouldn't be fit enough and had not prepared enough. I took a lot of encouragement from how optimistic the rest of the team were. Everyone else was so full of confidence that it quickly put my nerves aside!"

For Jonny the climb up Pen-y-Ghent was one of the highlights of the walk. He said: "Walking up the first path felt great, there wasn't anything else to do but crack on and see what the day held. It was early in the morning and the quickest climb."

After successfully conquering Pen-y-Ghent there was then a long walk up the valley to the next objective, Whernside. For some in the group the flatter sections in between each of the hills was the most enjoyable aspect of the walk.

Daisy said: "At these points we were able to chat and get to know each other more. We had some really funny moments. We also had our colleagues waiting for us at different check points. Seeing them in the distance was such a nice feeling, knowing we could get some moral support and refreshments."

After meeting the support team at Ribbleshead, they next had to climb Whernside, the highest peak in the Yorkshire Dales.

Abi added: "The climb felt like it went on forever – we would get to what we thought was the top, turn a corner and realise that the top was still a long way off! This happened on a few occasions and it felt soul destroying each time, to think you're there and realise you're not!"

Having finally reached the top of Whernside the team next had to climb Ingleborough. By this point their exertions was beginning to exact a physical toll on the walkers.

Daisy said: "I had blisters all over both of my feet by this point and was in so much pain. The physical strain the climb took on me, as well as the pain from my feet, was really difficult. I remember at one point, my legs just stopped working and I had to lift my legs up onto the next step!"

Supporting and encouraging each other the four successfully reached the top of Ingleborough.

Jonny said: "I felt proud that we'd got through it all together and it was lovely to see the relief and smiles on everyone's faces and the supportive messages from colleagues who hadn't been able to make it in person. It was also nice knowing that we'd helped to raise money for a great cause which will hopefully continue to make a difference locally."

Other fundraising events the team have organised this year include raffles, a Bake Off, and even a skydive.

Their Yorkshire Three Peaks Challenge has so far raised nearly £800, which takes their total funds raised throughout 2024 to £5,200.

Describing how much it means to her family that the team are supporting Footprints, Lyndsey added: "I will be forever grateful to the team at Cygnet Views for taking the time to ask and understand Archie's needs and learn about his support network.

"To know that staff are taking their time to fundraise is heartwarming.

"To know that people are taking their time to show an interest is overwhelming. We know first-hand how beneficial this resource is to families as sometimes families get very little support from other professionals so charity fundraising means so much to the them.

"Archie brightens the day of anyone who meets him. I am immensely proud of our little family and can't imagine life without him."

To make a donation please visit the team's fundraising page on [Just Giving](#).