

National Grid island trek boosts kidney charities

National Grid volunteers trek around the Isle of Wight to help kidney patients

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Big-hearted National Grid staff who took on a marathon 24-hour trek around the Isle of Wight are set to clock up thousands of pounds for kidney patients in Doncaster and across the UK.

Braving blisters, pulled muscles and strained ligaments, 26 National Grid employees and their families took part in the 67-plus-mile hike around the island in aid of the Doncaster and Bassetlaw Kidney Association (DABKA) and Kidney Research UK.

The staff, who came from across South Yorkshire and the East Midlands, have already raised nearly £1,000 and funds are continuing to pour in.

The event, which took place over Saturday 4 and Sunday 5 June, was organised by Doncaster-born National Grid gas emergency supervisor Darren Fitzpatrick.

Darren, who lives in nearby Crowle, Lincolnshire, said: "I'm very grateful to everyone who gave up their weekend for this tough but rewarding challenge in aid of a very worthwhile cause. Although the official distance was 67 miles, a few missed turns in the dark meant we actually covered 83 miles.

"These charities are very close to my heart. My dad, Mick, was on dialysis until he had a kidney transplant in February. We really appreciate all the support from the Doncaster Renal Unit and from Doncaster and Sheffield Hospitals and we wanted to help those suffering from kidney disease."

The funds raised for DABKA will help provide Doncaster and Bassetlaw Hospital's Renal department with specialist equipment which will make a huge difference for kidney dialysis patients. The rest of the funds will be donated to Kidney Research UK.

If anyone would like to contribute to the team's fundraising efforts they can donate to DABKA at <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/Darren-Fitzpatrick5> or Kidney Research UK at <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/Darren-Fitzpatrick6>

The Isle of Wight trek is the third charity challenge that veteran hiker and charity fundraiser Darren has organised.

Darren, a supervisor in South Yorkshire, manages a team of emergency engineers who keep the gas network in working order. He persuaded some 50 colleagues to join him for the gruelling Three Peaks Challenge in aid of Macmillan Cancer Support.

And when he proposed a second challenge for Macmillan – tackling the 84-mile Hadrian's Wall trek – more than 70 colleagues heeded the call. He was honoured by National Grid earlier this year after his efforts helped to raise £18,000 for Macmillan, which was the company's chosen charity.

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- We own and operate the gas National Transmission System in Great Britain, with day-to-day responsibility for balancing supply and demand. Our network comprises approximately 7,660 kilometres (4,760 miles) of high-pressure pipe and 618 above-ground installations.
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Find out more about the energy challenge and how National Grid is helping find solutions to some of the challenges we face at <https://www.nationalgrid.com/group/news>

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