Hospice supporter Michelle turns to pedal power to fundraise during the lockdown.

Wednesday 3 June, 2020

After her trip to Disneyland was cancelled, Michelle Mcglasson cycled the distance of 473.5 miles between Paris and her parents' home in Stockport, Greater Manchester, on an exercise bike raising £315 for Francis House Children's Hospice.

The hospice appealed for help to assist with the £250,000 shortfall in income from cancelled fundraising events.

Supporters responded in a variety of ways including pooling their daily exercise miles by running, walking, and cycling, asking family and friends to sponsor them.

Michelle, 35, an Early Education Worker for Stockport Council said: "I was due to go to Disneyland Paris with my friend Clare. We met whilst studying at Stockport College and we had booked to go on May 1st, the week after handing in our dissertations to celebrate finishing our BA (Honours) Childhood Studies Degree.

"I have been supporting the College to raise money for Francis House and was planning on having a fundraiser, which unfortunately could not go ahead, so I set myself a challenge."

After working out the distance from her parents' house to Disneyland Paris, Michelle calculated it would take 30 days to complete the ride, cycling after work and at weekends.

Michelle said: "The exercise bike had been stored in the garage for years and my dad set it up in the conservatory. I have taken part in the Manchester 10k before for Francis House, but the first few rides were like an uphill struggle, until dad took the bike apart and fixed the rusting wheels."

Halfway through the challenge Michelle was completing 20 to 30km on each ride, sometimes further on her non-working days.

Listening to music and streaming Disney Plus helped with her motivation, as well as the support of family, friends, and colleagues.

Michelle said: "It was a hot day for the last ride so I felt relief when it was over, but also proud that I'd kept it up and grateful to all those that had donated.

"Instead of a long weekend in Disneyland, I count myself lucky I am safe and well, and when it is safe to do so we will rebook our trip.

"Cycling has given me something else to focus on during COVID-19 and the opportunity to improve my own fitness and wellbeing. I wanted to do my bit to help, and I hope others would feel the same if they are in a similar position."

After 30 days of cycling Michelle celebrated by watching a virtual tour of Disneyland on YouTube and the Disney Parade and fireworks with champagne and a cake made by her mum.

"It will be worth the wait when I get to Disneyland for real and I am glad that I found a way to turn the cancelled trip into something positive," she added.

To donate to Michelle's visit https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/Michelle-Mcglasson2

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