Join Walking Kent's Castles event to not only raise money for two charities but to take advantage of a unique route

Tuesday 29 March, 2016

Two close friends and keen walkers will be walking 220 miles between 25 castles in Kent to raise funds for Sands, the stillbirth and neonatal death charity and Muscular Dystrophy UK.

Christopher Howard, 66, and David Roberts, 70, will commence their walk on Wednesday 27th April and will finish on Sunday 22nd May 2016, starting and finishing at Whitstable Castle. This is in support of a relative with muscular dystrophy and in memory of a baby grand-daughter that died at birth.

Over the 20 days of walking, they will pass some of England's finest Castles; Deal, Dover, Sissinghurst, Scotney, Hever, Lullingstone, Rochester, Leeds and Canterbury.

"Kent is a wonderful county, with miles and miles of ancient byways and footpaths, it would be a shame not to use them, especially as we like walking. And better still to feel that we are helping others less able than ourselves to benefit in some small way from our indulgence," says Christopher.

They have a target of £10,000 but have already raised over £5,000 for their chosen charities.

The pair have already 'road tested' the unique route they have designed to link some of the finest castles in England. There are a range of walks along the route, with some suiting all abilities and some are wheelchair accessible.Maps include advice to how to get the most out of the walks and heritage sites, along the way.

They are inviting everyone to join them on one of their choice of walks to enable these charities to continue their vital work.

If you cannot walk on any of the days with Chris and David, for £10 you can purchase all of the maps and walk at another time.

Carolyn Bray, Fundraising Manager at Sands said:

"I met Chris and David last year when they were both still test-walking the Kent's Castles route and I was touched by what truly lovely gentlemen they are; I can't stress enough how in awe of the incredible amount of time and effort that they have put into and organising this event.

"It's such a unique way to raise vital funds and awareness of both the beneficiary charities and we can't thank them enough for their commitment and efforts. Sands relies almost solely on the generosity of out supporters."

Anneke Liefting, Regional Development Manager at Muscular Dystrophy UK said:

"It has been an absolute pleasure supporting and getting to know Chris and David over the past 9 months. Their passion for both charities as well as walking has truly inspired me. The amount of time and energy the both of them have put into organising this walk and gathering donations has shown that is has definitely payed off. I cannot wait to walk with them on parts of their walk and support them to reach their target."

For more information please email Chris and David on walkingkentcastles8@gmail.com.

To join them please visit
https://www.uk-sands.org/get-involved/events/2016-03-07/walking-kents-castles*or*
www.musculardystrophyuk.org/events/walking-kents-castles.

If you don't want to take part, but would like to sponsor Chris and David, you can do so on by visiting their VirginMoneyGiving page.

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Notes to editors

80% of proceeds will go to Muscular Dystrophy UK, towards research into Limb Girdle muscular dystrophy, and 20% to Sands, the stillbirth and neonatal death charity.

For further information, please contact the Sands press office on 020 3598 1959 or media@uk-sands.org .

For more information about the work of Muscular Dystrophy UK please contact Anneke Liefting, Regional Development Manager, on 07920 824 212 or email: a.liefting@musculardystrophyuk.org.

NOT FOR PUBLICATION- Both Christopher and David are happy to be interviewed but only together.

Christopher Howard – Tel 01227 272520 Email - chris.howard@btinternet.com David Roberts- Tel 01227 277580Email - starlings66@talktalk.net.

To keep up to date on their progress please visit:
https://www.facebook.com/Walking-Kents-Castle-1524037424583424/info/?tab=page_

About Sands:

In 2013, over 5700 babies died just before, during or soon after birth. That's 110 babies every week.

Sands, the stillbirth and neonatal death charity, was established by bereaved parents in 1978.

Sands supports anyone affected by the death of a baby; works in partnership with health professionals to improve the quality of care and services offered to bereaved families; and promotes and funds research and changes in practice that could help to reduce the loss of babies' lives.

Sands is a national organisation, with over 100 regional support groups across the UK. Further information can be found at www.uk-sands.org.

About Muscular Dystrophy UK:

Muscular Dystrophy UK is the charity for 70,000 people living with muscle-wasting conditions. We make a difference today, by providing vital information and support to help people live independently. We make a difference for tomorrow, by accelerating progress in research and driving the campaign for access to emerging treatments.

Walking Kent's Castles – Itinerary

Please see below for an estimated itinerary for Chris and David's walk. Please only use as an approximate guide.

No.	Date	Description	Miles Appox	Estimated duration	Drop off point Grid Ref
		All walks start at 10 am.			
1	Wed 27 April	Whitstable Castle to Reculver Castle*	8	4h	Castle car park TR 113 671
2	Thur 28 April	Reculver Castle to Richborough Castle	12	6h	Reculver car park TR 226 692

3	Sat 30 April	Richborough to Walmer Castle via Sandown and Deal Castle and on to St Margarets Bay*	13	6.5h	Castle car park (EH) TR 322 598
4	Sun 1 May	St Margaret's Bayvia Dover Castle to Battle of Britain War Memorial	10.5	5h	St Margaret's Bay car park TR 368 444
5	Mon 2nd	Battle of Britain War Memorial to Lympne Castle via Castle Hill and Saltwood Castle	10.25	5.5h	Memorial car park TR 245 380
6	Tue 3rd	Lympne Castle to St Mary's Church Kenardington via Warehorne	12.5	6.5h	Castle car park TR 118 346
7	Thur 5th	St Mary's church Kenardingtonto Sissinghurst Castle	14	7h	Church car park TQ 974 320
8	Fri 6th	Sissinghurst Castle to Scotney Castle	10	5h	Castle car park (NT) TQ 808 383
9	Sat 7th	Scotney Castle to Brenchley with loop to Castle Hill	8.7	4.5	Castle car park (NT) TQ 686 351
10	Sun 8th	Brenchley to Tonbridge Castle	7.6	3.5h	Village car park TQ 679 471
11	Tue 10th	Tonbridge Castle to Hever Castle via Chiddingstone Castle	10	5h	Castle car park TQ 588 465
12	Wed 11th	Hever Castle to St Mary's Church at Sundridge Place	9	4.5h	Castle car park TQ 475 451

13	Thur 12th	St Mary's church at Sundridge Place to Eynsford Castle via Lullingstone Castle	9.75	5h	Church car park TQ 486 549
14	Sat 14th	Eynsford Castle to Cobham	10	5h	Village Hall car park TQ 543 658
15	Sun 15th	Cobham to Cooling Castle	9.5	4.5h	The Leather Bottle car park TQ 669 684
16	Mon 16th	Cooling Castle to Rochester Castle via Upnor Castle	7	3.5h	St Jame's Church Cooling TQ 753 758
17	Tue 17th	Rochester Castle to Allington Castle	10	5h	Castle riverside TQ 740 687
18	Thur 19th	Allington Castle to Harrietsham via Leeds Castle	11	5.5h	Castle car park TQ 748 576
19	Fri 20th	Harrietsham to Eastwell Manor	12	6h	Harrietsham station car park TQ 866 529
20	Sat 21st	Eastwell Manor to Canterbury Castle via Chilham Castle*	13	6.5h	Eastwell Manor TR 015 475
21	Sun 22nd	Canterbury Castle to Whitstable Castle*	9	4.5h	Rosemary Lane car park TR 145 574

*Accessible walkways suitable for powered chairs. The walks were tested in October 2015

ROUTE 1: Whitstable to Reculver Castle

ROUTE 3: This walk is accessible from Deal seafront to Sandown Castle, Deal Castle and Walmer Castle

ROUTE 20: It is accessible from Chilham Castle as there are lanes and roads to go along. From Chartham Church it's all footpaths /tracks but powered chair friendly.

ROUTE 21: This walk is accessible from Kent College Events car park and Main car park where there are disabled toilets and tea/coffee will be available from the College Chapel from 10.30am on Sunday the 22nd of May ONLY.

(EH) - English Heritage(NT) - National Trust

Events

Whitstable Castle will be waving them off on Wednesday 27th April at 9:45am.

Deal Castle have the **Ashford Concert Band** playing around noon on Saturday 30th April.

Leeds Castle will be having a BBQ Banquet Thursday 19th May, 3pm to 7pm. Tickets £15 from **R&B Star Electrical**.

St Alphege Church in **Whitstable** will be hosting a charity concert Saturday 21st May at 7:30pm.

Kent College Canterbury are hosting morning refreshments in the Chapel Sunday 22nd May at 10:30am.

Then back at the start, **Whitstable Castle** will host a Welcome Home Mad Hatter's Tea Party at 2pm.

Company Contact:

Sands, the stillbirth and neonatal death charity

E. natalie.cooper@uk-sands.org
W. https://www.uk-sands.org/

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