Wheeler wheels 10,000 km for military charity

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Media release

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A man from Essex will be cycling 10,000 kilometres this year for Blind Veterans UK, the national charity for vision-impaired ex-Service men and women.

Phil Wheeler, 38 and from Saffron Walden, was inspired by the world record for distance cycled in one year to push himself past the 6,000 km he cycled in 2015. Now, he has set himself an immense challenge of cycling 10,000 km this year, or more than 190 km each week, while raising awareness and money for Blind Veterans UK.

Phil says: “I decided that if I wanted to this massive challenge then I wanted to do some good and fundraise for a worthy cause.”

Phil feels passionately about supporting the Armed Forces and military charities. His grandfather served in the Royal Air Force during the Second World War and he has friends who are currently serving.

Phil says: “I have immense respect for the men and women that serve our country. With the Army base so near to where I live, it's hard to ignore the important work they do in keeping us safe.”

Recently, while Phil was driving to work he heard the story of Shaun Stocker, a blind veteran supported by Blind Veterans UK after he lost his sight and his legs in Afghanistan.

Phil says: “I stopped the car to be able to listen to Shaun's story fully. Men like him have given so much for us to be able to safely walk down the street and I am immensely grateful.

“I started looking into Blind Veterans UK and felt compelled to support the charity and the remarkable work they do in any way that I can.”

Now Phil is taking on three events as part of his year-long challenge. In April he will be on the Tour of Flanders in Belgium, a route of 127 km that will take him through muddy hills and terrains he hasn't experience before.

Phil says: “I've never cycled on cobblestones before so that will be interesting! I'm going with a group of friends and am really just looking to finish it and enjoy the route.”

Next up will be a tour of Cambridgeshire in June and then finally the Prudential RideLondon – Surrey 100 in July. The challenges combined with weekly cycles with the cycling club Walden Velo will get Phil to reach his target of 10,000 km by the end of this year.

Phil says: “I'm already up to 2861 kilometres so far so I'm on schedule and I'm confident I'll smash my goal.”

Please visit blindveterans.org.uk/support to learn more about the charity and how you can support its vital work today.

To support Phil as he cycles 10000 km for Blind Veterans UK, please visit www.justgiving.com/Philcycles10000kmin2016.

For all media enquiries please contact:

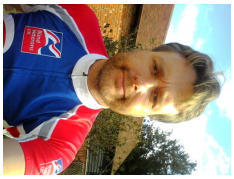
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Notes to Editor

Blind Veterans UK

Blind Veterans UK (formerly St Dunstan's) is a national charity that believes that no-one who has served our country should have to battle blindness alone. It provides blind and vision impaired ex-Service men and women with lifelong support including welfare support, rehabilitation, training, residential and respite care.

The charity needs £100 million over 5 years to provide lifelong support to blind ex-Service men and women. Find out more at: www.blindveterans.org.uk, and follow us on Facebook at: www.facebook.com/blindveteransuk and on Twitter at: twitter.com/blindveterans.

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