



The Land's End to John O'Groats Walk

Raising awareness of Inner Wheel and money for the Stroke Association

When I was thinking of ways in which Inner Wheel members could raise funds for the Stroke Association, my charity for the year, I did not want members to feel 'yet another charity to support'.

We are always being asked for funds for many good causes, and often our District Chairman has a chosen charity to support, as well as our Club President, and often the District International Service Chairman too. Sometimes it all seems too much! I wanted us to be able to raise funds, but not necessarily from our own pockets.



Then a friend suggested that Inner Wheel walk from Land's End to John O'Groats. When thinking about this I realised that organising such a walk, albeit in relay terms, was far too much of a challenge for me to undertake. But after thinking about this for some time, and many helpful conversations later this idea was formed.

Inner Wheel members from Great Britain and Ireland will cover the distance from Land's End to John O'Groats, and from the most northerly tip of Ireland to the most southerly, and more, but not necessarily in the right order, or indeed at the same time. I calculated the number of miles we need to cover and divided them by the number of clubs in existence in 2020 and have allocated each club two and a half miles to cover. Ideally each member would walk for 2.5 miles, gaining sponsorship for each mile completed. Sponsorship can be found by asking friends, relatives, neighbours, or members of any other organisations they might belong to. In a club like mine where the average age is about 80, we could aim for half a mile each. Incidentally, this is the return distance from the car park to a very nice tea shop we know. Alternatively, clubs could combine in groups, or the district could organise a walk.





If it is possible, we could advertise the walk and invite members of the public to join us, sponsored too would be nice. We could use balloons and posters and have leaflets ready to hand out. High viz jackets are available from Inner Wheel HQ in London. What about collecting buckets to gather cash from passers-by and onlookers?

We also need to seek press coverage in our local area. Why not try Local TV and radio

too? It may be that supporters of the Stroke Association may also like to join us. Can you let them know at innerwheel@stroke.org.uk If the venue is suitable, how about serving tea and cake to spectators – extra cash!



The walks can be arranged at any time throughout the year, but if you could inform me of the date well in advance, I would be incredibly grateful. Firstly, I would love to come along if I am free, my Inner Wheel mascot is always available, and secondly the Stroke Association would like to know so they can offer their help. For those of you who don't know about my teddy mascot – three have been made for me by a stroke survivor and one will

accompany me on my travels, the others are for you to use when walking or at any other event. "Teddy" is hoping to write a blog about her travels, so photos please.

The idea of this walk was planned some time ago, and since then we have all been inspired by 'Captain Tom'. This obviously gave one of our more elderly members a great idea. She said that there was no way in which she could complete even half a mile, not even with the offer of a cream bun at the end! She was, however, happy to complete her half mile over a period of time. She suggested that for those who found the challenge too difficult, we had an alternative challenge called, Captain Tom. Nobody is expecting our members to complete the laps or raise the funds he did, but he provides us with inspiration, nevertheless. We calculated that two and a half miles is about 6,000 steps. She suggested that members could complete their 6,000 steps over a week, or a month, whatever felt comfortable for them. They could ask for sponsorship per step, or per hundred, say. So now we have two parallel challenges, something for everyone.

Land's End to John O'Groats walk

For your information.....

The internet tells me that the distance between Land's End and John O'Groats is 837 miles. It also tells me that the most northerly point in Ireland is Mallin Head and the most southerly, Fastnet Rock. The distance between them is 409 miles. My calculations give a total distance for both as 1246 miles.

According to the 2020 handbook there are 534 clubs. When I divide the distance to be walked by the number of clubs, each club should do about 2.3 miles. I thought that 2.5 miles was a nice round number. If every member of every club raised £1 for each mile walked, we would have such a magnificent sum! I hope that many members will be able to get more sponsorship than that. What an amazing total of funds that would be!

What about the non-walkers?

If a club feels it really cannot take part in this walk or the Captain Tom version, which would be such a shame, it could always fall back on the Coffee Morning or Afternoon Tea. Inner Wheel organises these events so well, and the cakes are always delicious. I'd come to those if I were able, just for the cake!

But whatever you raise you can be sure that the Stroke Association will put it to good use.

Thank you in advance for all your efforts.

