Louise Smalley Challenge Walk 2022

Saturday 18th June 2022

Application to walk deadline is May 31st.

**The Louise Smalley Walk is an award winning annual sponsored challenge walk of 40 (and a bit) miles taking place in June. It has a reputation for being one of the best, well organised and well run events of its kind. Everyone from any community is invited to take part, some walkers even come from abroad to be part of the award winning event.**

In 1992 Louise Smalley was born to Trev and Wendy, unfortunately she had a serious heart defect and was given only days to live by her doctors. Louise defied the odds and lived to be 13 months old in which time she contracted, fought and beat the deadly disease meningitis. It is Louise’s fighting spirit that is the inspiration behind the walk and behind the community organising it.

The community of the village of Whitwell, North Derbyshire, organise, plan the route, co-ordinate and provide transport, first aid, back up, assistance, admin, sustenance, refreshments, sponsorship, route maps, practice walks and probably the majority of walkers, of which there are usually between 80 and 100. There is a presentation evening for all that complete the walk, where a cheque for the amount raised is presented to the year’s beneficiary, which this year will be Ashgate Hospice (Chesterfield). Following the last walk in 2021 £15,000 was raised for Neurocare (Sheffield). The walks beneficiaries are chosen by a democratic process of nomination and voting by those that have walked or provided back up during the previous year’s walk, a truly exceptional contribution by a community.

The first walk took place in 1994 following a route from the Limey Way back to the village. Another 8 walks make up the rota of walks including those from Monsal Head, Millers Dale and Ladybower, all of which end at the Royal Oak, Whitwell. Since 1994 the walk has raised nearly £235,000 having a huge impact on the community but more importantly a huge impact on the day to day lives of the users of groups that become beneficiaries, improving health, wellbeing, quality of life and, in some unfortunate cases, quality of death. These groups have included the likes of Sick Childrens Trust (Sheffield) The Bolsover Project, Stubbin Wood Special School, other local schools, Scouts and Guides, Bluebell Wood Childrens and Bassetlaw Hospices, Amy’s Retreat and on what would have been Louise’s 20th birthday, Chesterfield Royal Hospital’s appeal to build a new children’s playroom.

Hard to think that such an ordeal could be such an inspiration to so many people over so many years.

More information and application forms are available at [www.louisesmalleywalk.com](http://www.louisesmalleywalk.com)