



Press Release

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Join James and Jasper on the Walk of Life

Calling all walkers! There's still time to join the Walk of Life charity marathon and help raise tens of thousands of pounds for patients and families at the Royal United Hospitals (RUH) Bath.

Nearly 400 people have already signed up for The Walk of Life event on Saturday 11 May, organised by the RUH's charity, The Forever Friends Appeal – and we're encouraging even more people to sign up and take part.

There are two distances to choose from – the full 26.2 miles from Bishop Cannings, near Devizes, along the Kennett and Avon canal to the finish line at the Holburne Museum in Bath or the 10-mile distance starting in Bradford on Avon in the afternoon.

RUH Chief Executive, James Scott will be walking the 10-mile section with his Cocker Spaniel, Jasper. James said:

"I am incredibly proud of The Forever Friends Appeal and what they have achieved during the past 20 years. I have witnessed first-hand the difference our charity has made to patients and their families, and by taking part in this year's Walk of Life, this is me doing my bit for the Appeal.

"I never cease to be amazed by the hundreds of inspirational walkers who come together with the aim of wanting to make a real difference for future patients. I am looking forward to meeting some of our supporters along the way and hearing their stories, and I want to take this opportunity to thank everyone who's taking part."

Last year's Walk of Life event raised over £100,000 for the hospital. That money has helped fund a number of projects including the charity's RUH Cancer Care campaign for the new Dyson Cancer Centre, the new RNHRD and Therapies Centre, as well as support for wards and departments in the hospital.

Another walker taking part this year is Katie Bridge from Glastonbury, who's raising money for the RUH Cancer Care campaign. She said:

"It is an honour to walk in memory of my truly wonderful, brave dad, Pete Bridge. He began treatment for skin cancer at the RUH in 2009 and over the next eight years had chemotherapy, radiotherapy and radiation therapy.

"In 2018, he attended the hospital numerous times and his last six week stay was on the wonderful Waterhouse ward, where we slowly realised that nothing more could be done. But, thanks to the hospital staff and the lovely carers at Dorothy House, he got his wish to come home.

"He wanted to make Christmas but sadly he lost his marathon battle with cancer just before. Whenever I visited the RUH, I always noticed the events organised by The Forever Friends Appeal, so it was an easy decision for me to take part in their Walk of Life event, to support the RUH and say thank you. I am hoping I can help raise much-needed funds for the new Cancer Centre."

Laura Pearce, Events and Community Officer, The Forever Friends Appeal said:

“It’s just a month until the event, so there’s still time to sign up if anyone wishes to take part. We are looking forward to seeing hundreds of people join us and those who complete the challenge will receive a special edition 20th anniversary Walk of Life t-shirt and finisher medal.”

The Walk of Life event is open to both men and women and costs £25 to register. Participants are asked to raise a minimum £100 for any ward or department at the RUH close to your heart, or one of the charity’s major campaigns, The RNHRD and Brownsword Therapies Centre and the Dyson Cancer Care.

In return, The Forever Friends Appeal will provide walkers with lots of fundraising and training support, as well as complimentary refreshments and treats. There will be cake at the finish line, as well as a medal and plenty of finish line celebrations.

To find out more about the Walk of Life and to sign up, visit www.foreverfriendsappeal.co.uk.

Ends

For more information contact Rebecca Hedges, Marketing and Communications Officer on 01225 826282 or email: Rebecca.hedges@nhs.net

Notes to Editor:

About The Forever Friends Appeal

- The Forever Friends Appeal is the principal fundraising charity for the Royal United Hospitals, Bath. As well as fundraising for major campaigns, we raise funds for the hospital’s wards and departments to pay for state-of-the-art medical equipment and facilities, research and innovations, staff training and the creation of welcoming and highly beneficial healing environments for our patients and their families. Each year we invest in projects that go above and beyond what the NHS can provide.
- It’s the 20th anniversary of The Forever Friends Appeal in June 2019 and as we turn 20, we are inviting the public to join us celebrating, rediscover how we’ve supported patient care at the RUH and help us fundraise for some very Special Appeals – Facial Surgery & Orthodontics Unit, Critical Care Unit, Breast Unit and The Friendly Faces Project.
- For more information about the Appeal visit: www.foreverfriendsappeal.co.uk

Cancer Care Campaign

- The Appeal’s current major fundraising campaign is for a pioneering new Cancer Centre at the RUH - taking a holistic approach that is designed to produce a highly beneficial healing environment for patients and their families.
- The new Cancer Centre will house a number of cancer services including; outpatient department and waiting areas, radiotherapy with a CT Simulator, oncology ward, chemotherapy and a day care unit, nuclear medicine and medical physics, research and development for clinical research and trials as well as a wellbeing and information support hub which will be a dedicated area to provide support to cancer patients receiving treatment across the RUH site.
- Through support from the public and major donations from The James Dyson Foundation & Medlock Charitable Trust, the Appeal has raised over £9 million for the new Cancer Centre and it is very much hoped that with the help of our donors we will be able to sustain the campaign into 2019.
- Construction of the Cancer Centre is planned to commence in 2019.
- The Centre will be jointly funded NHS / Charitable Funds partnership with the parties contributing c66% / 33% respectively.

- For more information about the campaign visit: www.foreverfriendsappeal.co.uk/ruhcancelcentre

RNHRD & Therapies Centre Campaign

- The Forever Friends Appeal is raising a minimum of £2 million towards this £16 million project in association with the RNHRD Charitable Fund – with the Brownsword Charitable Foundation challenging the public to back the appeal by generously promising to match every pound donated up to the level of £1 million. For more information about the RNHRD and Therapies Centre campaign visit: www.foreverfriendsappeal.co.uk/rnhrd-therapies-centre
- The RNHRD and Therapies Centre will bring together the RUH's rheumatology, therapies and a number of pain management services which are currently provided at the Royal National Hospital for Rheumatic Diseases' (RNHRD) Mineral Water Hospital site – also known as The Min. The new RNHRD and Therapies Centre will be a purpose-built outpatient facility and will include a new hydrotherapy pool, a gym, a therapeutic garden and clinical areas to improve patient experience, providing the treatment, care and education for patients to recover from episodes of illness or injury, or to manage their long-term condition.