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# Coast 2 Coast

Celebrating 25 years

St Bees to Robin Hood's Bay (1999 – 2023)

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# How it all began

**The Coast 2 Coast Challenge (C2C) was introduced into the School's sporting culture by Michelle Craig, a New Zealander who came to teach English and PE at WGS from September 1998 until 2001. At her school in New Zealand they used to run an annual 24-hour sponsored relay run around a large lake.**

After a visit to St. Bees Head and cycling across to Robin Hood's Bay by road, Michelle suggested this as a possible route for 24-hour C2C relay using eight runners. Bernard Trafford, the Head at the time, agreed, and the first attempt was made by eight Year 11 students in the Autumn term of 1999. Tim Browning and John Johnson were the elected drivers and accompanied Michelle and the team for the first WGS C2C attempt.

Stuart McKewan was awarded the honour of being the first WGS C2C runner as the 1999 team set out at 6am on a dark, winter's morning. Those who are familiar with the event will know that the runners traditionally dip their feet into the sea at the start of the challenge. However, by the time Stuart's teammates had done so and boarded the minibus, Stuart, a county athlete, had run on and vanished out of sight! He took a wrong turn, and it took several minutes driving around to find him! Fortunately, after this initial scare the team soon fell into a happy rhythm of 30-minute relays, quickly covering ground and successfully completing the course in the target time.

This first experience was to prove invaluable for future planning – learning how easy it was to take a wrong turn and just how much was involved in planning and executing the C2C challenge. The route has evolved over time to its current 170-mile course but previously covered up to 190 miles and went via Whitby. It is testament to the WGS spirit that 25 years on, this event is a firm favourite and still being enjoyed annually by students, staff and parents alike. Each year the C2C team sets themselves a target of £3,000 to raise for a charity of their choice, this has always been achieved and in many cases surpassed significantly thanks to the generosity of the WGS community.

It was decided that the summer months would be a more favourable time of year to complete the relay run and the second trip was made in the summer of 2000, this time by Year 10 students. Since then the May half-term has been earmarked in the School calendar for Coast 2 Coast. Up to ten students in Year 10 are selected and undertake a rigorous 16-week training programme before embarking on this life-changing experience.

Since that first year, the C2C event has grown in stature thanks to so many staff stepping forward to help with training and along the course. Each year many students put themselves forward and it is always a difficult decision to have to disappoint those who do not get selected. Those that are lucky enough to take part often say it is one of the highlights of their WGS days. We are proud that through their endeavours, an impressive 248 pairs of legs have crossed a total of 4,256 miles and raised over **£100,000** for various charities over the last quarter of a century. Thank you to our sponsors who are listed at the end of this book for their generous support and to all our WGS families and friends.

We are extremely grateful to Michelle for introducing this memorable event to the WGS calendar and to former Head, Bernard Trafford, for supporting the idea. Bernard's recount of the first Coast 2 Coast can be read overleaf, followed by the memories of members of the teams over the years. Enjoy!



# The route

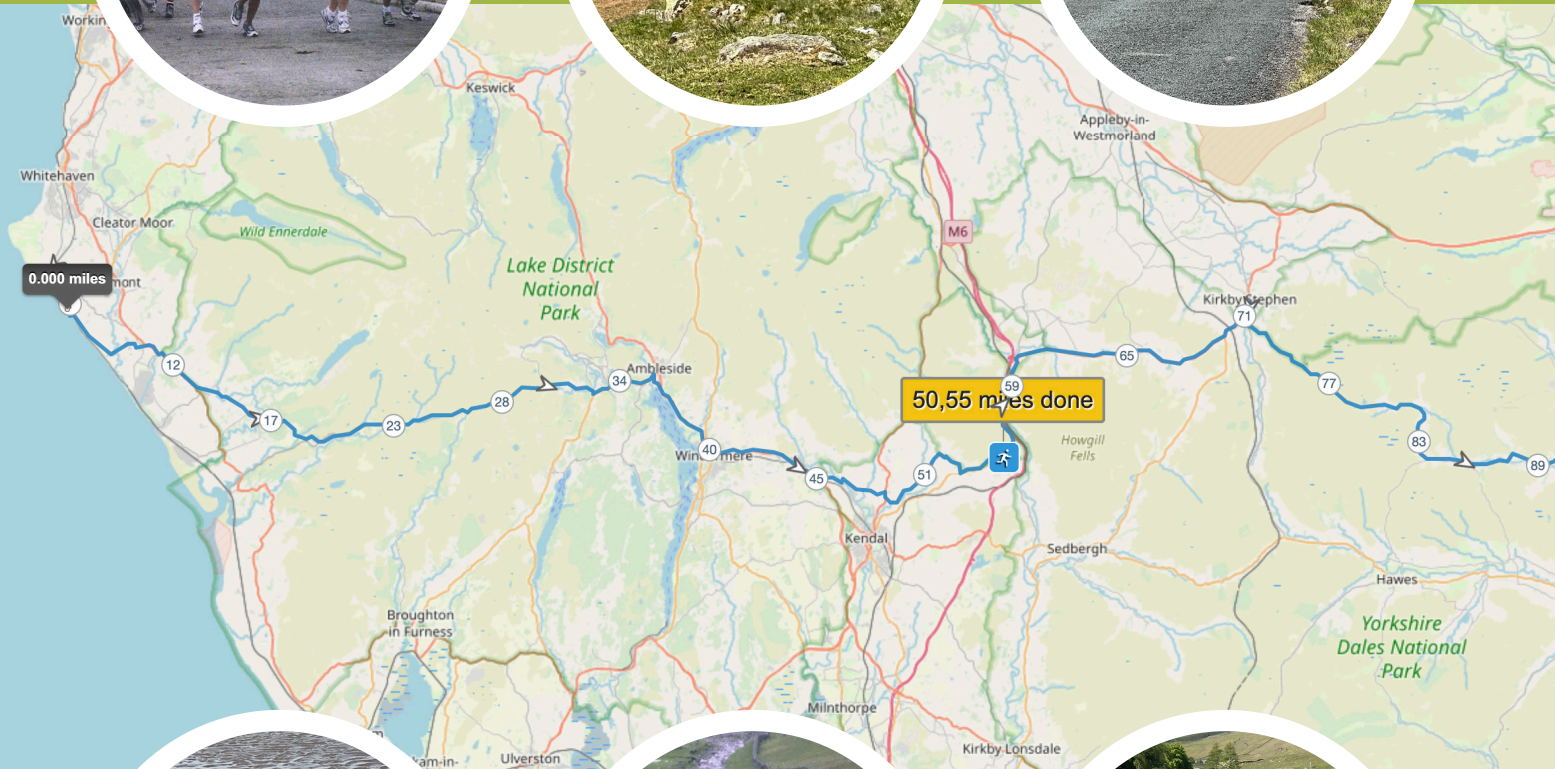
St Bees - Start Point



Hardknott Stretch



Wrynose Stretch



St Bees - Start Point

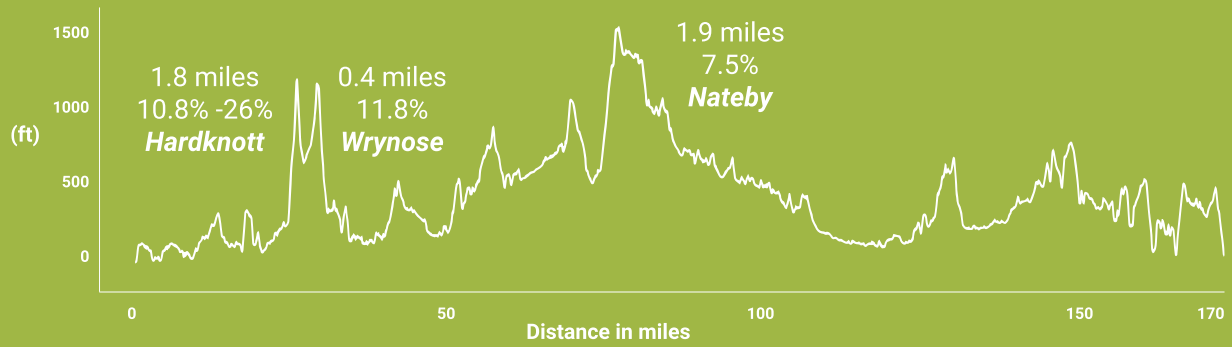


Hardknott Stretch



Wrynose Stretch





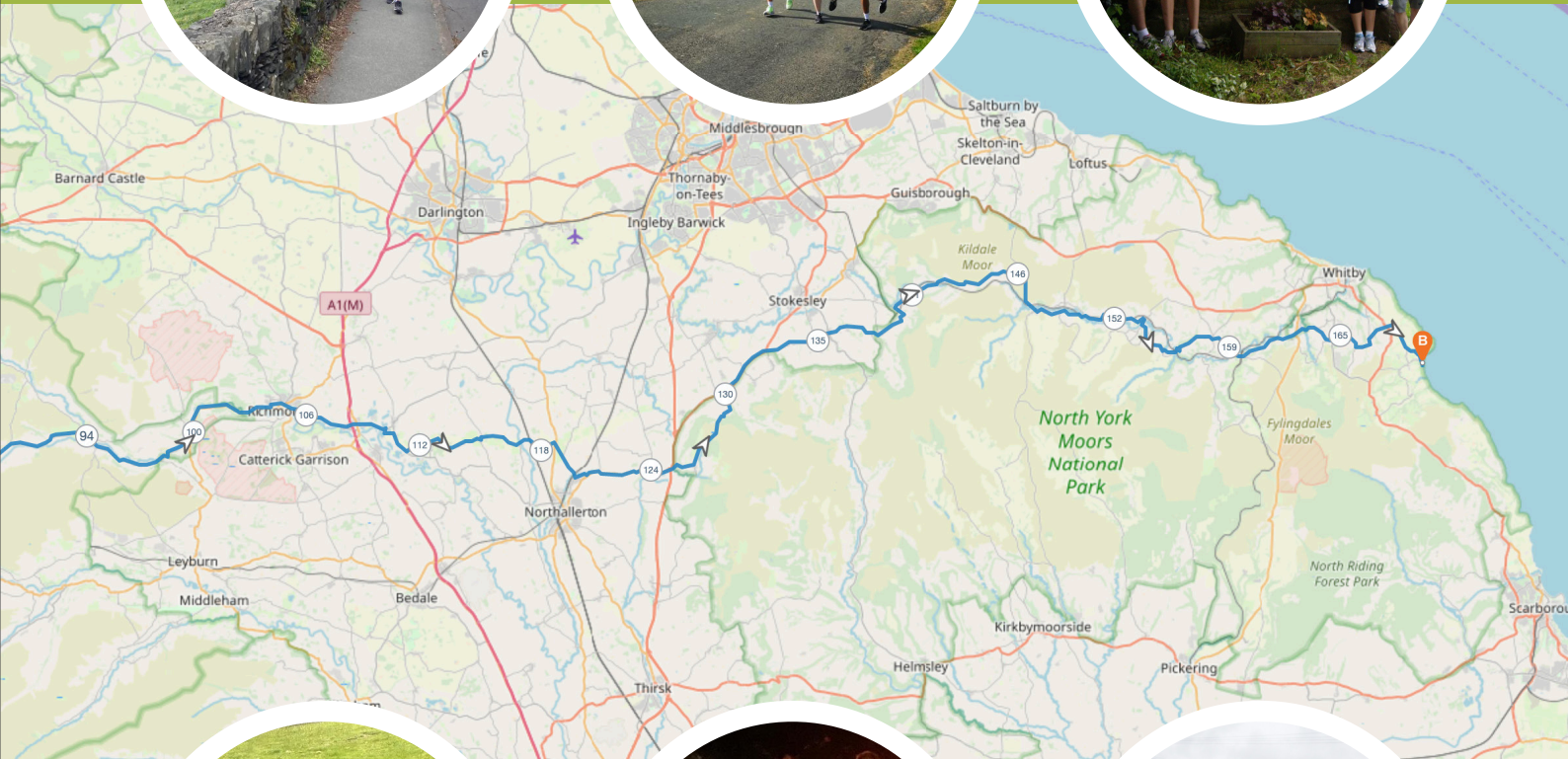
Windermere Stretch



Nateby Stretch



Robin Hood's Bay - Finish



Windermere Stretch



Nateby Stretch



Robin Hood's Bay - Finish

1999

# The very first C2C



## The Team

Sarah Maidment  
Stuart McEwan  
Matthew Nightingale  
Craig Thomas  
Emily Wright

Andrew Egginton  
Michael Evans  
Tom Johnson

Former Head, Bernard Trafford, drove up on the Saturday to give drivers Tim and John a break. Here is his account, written in his own inimitable style!



### Saturday 10.40

Why am I belting up M6 on the first day of half-term? Weakness. Back in June, Miss Craig said she had eight Fifth Year students in training to run a coast-to-coast non-stop relay from St Bees Head in Cumbria to Robin Hood's Bay near Whitby. Unthinkingly I agreed to help.

### 14.00

I'm now the relief minibus driver. They're eight hours in, Stuart the current runner; big, strong, fast, coasting downhill out of the Lakes. Cheerful banter in the back of the bus. Easy.

### 14.40

Eggy quietly takes us through a problem-free stint (his style throughout). Send Tom the wrong way at a junction (we're using the back roads, and the map's not clear): good moment for a pee stop. A few have the runs, from nerves or exertion. Conversation becomes scatological.

### 15.55

Spot Services sign. Plumbing and a seat instead of a hedge and baby-wipes! Toilets in village pub. Resist temptation of draught Bass but catch up on football scores. Thus late for Matt's 4pm changeover; he takes it well, considering he's on a long hill. After ten hours, spirits are still high: average 7.5mph maintained. Remember why I volunteered: it's good to be part of this.



**16.30**

The Pennines. Mike climbs for 25 solid minutes over Birkdale Common (1 in 5): pace never slackens. Bus quiet, in awe: even Emily stops claiming that Hardknott Pass was tougher.

**17.00**

Mike's turn ends to spontaneous applause. Sarah has real stomach trouble: in pain, guts in spasm, insists she'll do her stint. Ten minutes in she has to head into the bushes, but carries on. Raw courage. Humbling.

**18.00**

12 hours gone. Legs are stiff, bodies smell, guts ache. Bus stinks of sweat, baby wipes and what baby wipes are there to wipe: ribald jokes make it bearable. Stu sets off downhill (hooray!). Heavens open as darkness falls: Stu waves in mock triumph and splashes on. I hand over.

**Sunday 01.30 - 05.00**

Had parked car on moor above Osmotherley to wait for runners: just dozed off when ... loving couples arrived at closing time. 4x4s with creaking springs. So much for sleep! Emily leads the bus up to me: supremely fit, still finds breath to complain about getting all the hills. Night routine: each runner finishes, gets into support van, sleeps for an hour, then moves to second bus to massage muscles, eat, drink, prepare for next stint. But they don't sleep much: too keyed up, too tired. Even in this graveyard slot though, morale never flags. Pathetic, repetitive farting jokes keep laughs coming. Miss Craig gives everyone a truly disgusting banana-flavoured high protein drink. Emily surreptitiously passes it to Stu (who will eat or drink anything) and lies through her teeth that she's drunk it. This is survival. Blisters, cramp and apparently endless North York Moors. Caught in the bus headlights, their shoulders droop to one side or the other. Craig hops to relieve the pain in his calves and almost stops on yet another huge hill - almost, but not quite. Mike takes over, up and up. His left groin hurts, and Sarah's right - at least the tummy pills have worked. I hand over the wheel as Emily sets off up another nightmare hill - they're all nightmares now.

**07.00**

Wake up in my car, near the end, chilled and grumpy. Check finish, then drive back along route: meet Mike, my hero, striding out. Groans when he learns it's still a mile to the bottom. Team dons smart Coast-2-Coast t-shirts and poses for team photo by village sign. All run down the impossibly steep hill and walk painfully out to the sea: tide's out.

183 miles in 26.5 hours. Indescribable sense of achievement. I want to run up and down this sleepy, wet seaside town and make people pay homage to them. Head into nearest cafe. Breakfast for 20: runners, staff, parents and siblings celebrate on a heart-attack special and gallons of tea. One of those great together moments. So why did we do it? For them. My privilege, too: I watched eight youngsters find real courage and grow as people. A good start to anyone's half-term.

**By Bernard Trafford**



# 2000

# Coast 2 Coast



## The Team

Kate Bailey

Caoire Blakemore

Sally Brown

Dean Bryant

Dewi Byrne

Jane Duru

Stephen Dungar

Esther Hendriks

Alison McAllister

Anne Mondésert



Running for over 24 hours.... None-stop..... passing a tie to teammates from one side of the country to the other.... Sign us up! The 2000 team were the second cohort to undertake the challenge set by Michelle Craig and what a challenge it was!

A few extra Richmond Road and Finchfield Hill runs at lunchtime and we were off!

I remember we were pretty lucky with the weather and as the event was still so raw the team ran as individuals with only the headlights of the minibus for company. One particular memory I have was running round a bend and being confronted by a flock of sheep blocking the route. I turned to face the minibus for both reassurance and instruction only to hear JJ and Lucy Pearson counting the sheep as they were playing a cricket based game for entertainment where sheep were runs and cows were wickets!

If my memory serves me, once we had run our half an hour we would 'recover' in the back of a parental support car eating a few cold chips, a mars bar washed down with some Lucozade before returning to the minibus.

Dean Bryant recalls when he was making his way up Hardknott/Wrynose and the rest of the squad had to jump out the minibus as it was struggling to get up the gradient as it was too heavy and we had to be picked up by support cars to get us round.

One of the most unexpected realities was toileting in fields and by the road side because, of course, there were very few toilet blocks in the middle of the Yorkshire Dales. It was quite a team building experience to have to dive behind the nearest hedge and try to go next to a friend.

I still remember the feeling of coming down the steep hill in Robin Hood's Bay to our parents/families' applause, exhausted and slightly delirious having barely slept but proud to have been a part of something very special. Although I recall we had to repeat this a few times because some of the parents had got lost so missed the original final run down to the sea. What's a little more running when you've already done the 100+miles though eh?

I've been fortunate enough to run the C2C a further 4 times as a former member of staff and it's an event that has a strong hold in my heart. In fact I met C2C teammate Sally Irving (née Brown) en route once in Reeth as we popped into a pub for a quick toilet stop and amazingly she was in there!

There is something very special about watching the sunrise and sunset on a deserted country lane with the ticking sound and orange glow of the hazard lights of the minibus.

To so many Nateby, Wrynose, Gosforth railway, Thwaite, Muker, Gunnerside and Osmotherley are just geographical locations but to a select few these places mean so much more.

***Ali Causebrook (née McAllister)***  
***Team 2000***



# 2001

# Coast 2 Coast



Liam Almond  
Debbie Duru  
Poppy Flint  
Laura Leigh

## The Team

Chris Lowe  
Charlotte Maidment  
Gareth Minton  
Adam Parr  
Sunil Ryan  
Simon Varcoe



I know what you're probably thinking - is there a printing error? St Bees to Tynemouth is not the conventional Coast to Coast route attempted by other WGS runners. Well, due to a certain foot and mouth virus that hit us in 2001, and may I stress, to avoid the embarrassing headline 'Runners Spread Foot and Mouth Across England' hitting newspapers across the country, Dr Hinchliffe and Co decided to change the normal C2C route to a shorter run of 120 miles taking us up by Hadrian's Wall.

Back in February, Miss Craig set us running for half an hour around a muddy rugby field - this was to be the start of 17 weeks of training. The departure of Miss Craig left us treading water for a couple of weeks, until Mr King and Mrs Lister took us under their wing.

St. Bees: We had survived a minibus journey driven by Dr Trafford (alias Damien Hill) and Mr John Johnson (Michael Schumacher). We ate bowls of pasta, undertook the WGS ritual of dipping our trainers into the freezing sea and proceeded to pose for photos. Stopwatches were started and the run began, with Chris pacing on ahead. The rest of us followed in the bus and although we had two Geography teachers onboard, we still got lost in the first few minutes of the run! Miss Kostyrka found a very smart sign: 'Beware Runners'. Is it god sent? It certainly seems to be!

Chris finishes, Sunil, Adam, Liam, Debbie, Si, Poppy and Gareth all run their stints, then it's my turn. It's **4.20pm**. I proceed to climb a solid hill for over 20 minutes.

It's hot, I ache, but I seem to have an unlimited amount of energy. Mrs Lister accompanies me on all my runs. She is invaluable, she talks when I have no breath, and Sarah, my sister (a previous C2C runner) seems to have huge amounts of sisterly love (it makes a change from family bust-ups!). I reach the brow of the hill and put on a spurt. I can't believe myself, where has this energy come from?



Chris starts again and takes his shirt off. Dr T murmurs in disgust, "Can't he keep that shirt of his on? Can't he wait until he gets a six pack?" Then it's Sunil who has far too much energy - he returns Parrsy's shouts of, "Sunil. Sunil, give us a wave!" with a dance Michael Flatley would be proud of. We cross A roads, pass Bassenthwaite, glance at bleak, barren moors that seem to go on for miles and sleepy towns where the teachers are enjoying a pint. We have a pee stop while the bikes carry on with Liam, and we subsequently end up climbing over a barbed wire fence and getting stung by nettles! Liam, although small, has a lot of stamina and is very fast.

We meet Liam and Sunil's mums who have been searching the sleepy villages for art materials for banners. We end up with two smart sheets with 'C2C 2001' plastered on with black spray paint. The signs are tied onto the sides of the vans and we set off again. The cycle of runners continues: Si, who took every run without complaining, Poppy who earned her title 'Queen of the Hills' and Gaz who was told to slow down so we would not run through Newcastle too early and meet the Newcastle clubbers!

It's **8.50pm** and time for my stint again. Mrs Lister accompanies me, as well as Mr 'I really shouldn't have just eaten that plate of steak and chips' King and Mr Browning. To my dismay, it's another great humungous hill. It must have been steep as Mr Browning gave up after about 10 minutes on the bike! I reached the brow and ran past parts of the original Hadrian's Wall.

Whether I had been eating too many energy sweets, or whether 17 weeks of training had destroyed my sanity, I don't know, but I decided to ceremoniously kiss the wall. I dashed across the road to inspect the other side of miraculous stonework! No-one can say I don't appreciate the Romans' talent for architecture! I also managed to shout at Dr Trafford for landing me with all the hills!

After this excitement I refuelled, and Chris and I went to sleep on the 'sleeping bus'. Well I lay awake while Chris snored and JJ, Mr King, Mr Browning and Dr T assessed the local fayre. We then travelled to a lay-by to let the teachers have a snooze for a while. At about **12.30pm**, the mobile rang saying they needed me in 20 minutes. Dr T was just about to have a pee when the police arrived in the lay-by! Luckily they were only checking we were OK!

On arrival back at the bus, I learnt Debbie had to retire from the run with pain from her shin splints. Deb was a real heroine. Even at **1:00am** it was still really warm. Running in pitch black was a real experience. All of the team said it was something really special. All we could see in the distance was the lights of Newcastle, which really spurred us on. We ran through Newcastle around **3.00am**, and there were still people coming home from the bars and clubs!

I started my run about 15 minutes into Gaz's stint, because Dr T couldn't remember how far away the end was and wanted to ensure I had another run. The beach seemed miles and miles away. When it came into sight, the team ran down to the convoy who had prepared us with a mini London marathon ending. Deb, like a heroine, got onto the bike so she could finish in style. Chris and Parrsy raced down to the beach. There were so many steps, they seemed to go on for hours and they still could not decide who got there first! The rest of us followed more sedately. We ran into the sea and didn't care how wet we got. It was cold, it was **6:00am** on a Sunday morning but we had finished the run of a lifetime. Everyone started and finished. We celebrated with plastic glasses full of champagne and posed for more photos.

After a hearty breakfast we slept on South Shields beach, slept in the hotel and slept all the way home. We would all like to thank our parents for their encouragement and to the teachers for supporting us both on the run and through the training. I would also like to thank all of the team, for all their hard work and to my sis, Sarah. Sarah cycled the whole way except for three 30-minute breaks she took for food and drink.

**By Charlotte Maidment**



# 2002

# Coast 2 Coast



Craig Adey

David Good

Becci Holland

## The Team

Suneet Julka

Beth Shakesheff

Megan Shakesheff

Joe Thorne

Will Turner

Karen Walton



This year saw a return to the normal route run by the first ever C2C at WGS. After a long journey we arrived at St Bees, undertaking the ritual of dipping our trainers into the sea, before having jacket potatoes at Tesco's. Everybody was feeling apprehensive about the huge challenge that lay ahead but first we had to negotiate a bizarre night sleeping on crash mats in the squash courts of St Bees School, where every snore and cough was magnified!



At the crack of dawn Kaz started running with a tie around her neck, thus starting a new tradition that the school tie should be dipped into the sea at both ends and worn by every runner in between.

We soon got established into the cycle of runners (Kaz, Craig, Beth, Thorney, Meg, me, Rosie and Suneet) and the nervousness of the night before disappeared as we coasted along towards the Lakes. For two unlucky runners there was an early challenge in the shape of Hardknott Pass. Craig and I ascended the lung-bursting hill and experienced the pain that every runner would have to endure at some point - everyone seemed to have hills!

Everyone enjoyed this stage of the run as we were still fresh and enthusiastic. There were some great runs going through villages and countryside as the evening drew in. The exception was for Craig and Thorney who had to run up Birkdale Common, probably the toughest single hill on the route. Mind you, the rest of us had a group of smaller hills that ended up being just as hard (Rosie and Kaz were particularly unlucky).

The huge stocks of lucozade tablets and tasty home-made pasta kept everyone going into the night, but the previous enthusiasm turned into dread as the three and a half hours rest was over, and it was time for yet another run. The night was a strange time, and if you started to doze off while running you were kept awake by the constant singing and chatting of Becci who was on the bike. I still can't understand how she could have been so lively - must have been the lucozade tablets. Running at night was an unusual but truly memorable experience - it was **3.30am** and most people were asleep while you were running through the middle of nowhere!

It was during this time that we realised the huge importance of the reserve runners (Will and Becci), Mrs Lister (who seemed to be on every run) and the teachers on the bike (although Kingy found it difficult to steer with his bad leg!). It was so much easier to have someone keeping you company while running - we couldn't have done it without them.

Night merged into day as we had a hard and hilly section over the North Yorkshire Moors. With no sleep this was when the encouragement was vital - we still had a fair way to go. But everyone kept going, so that suddenly, it seemed we were within a mere 10 miles from Robin Hood's Bay. Nobody wanted to do the full 30 minutes so the running cycle was scrapped and people paired up for 15-minute stints. If you could see someone was struggling (which was everyone by now) someone would instinctively yell "keep going!" or "woo-hoo!". The team spirit was amazing.

At last the Robin Hood's Bay sign appeared ahead and we'd actually done it! A tremendous gathering of parents, relatives and friends congregated on the slippery ramp that led into the sea, as champagne was sprayed, pictures were taken and most people ended up getting wet!

The enormous sense of achievement and pride pushed away the pain from the aching legs. A huge celebratory breakfast raised people's spirits even higher. Afterwards we recovered in a plush hotel near Doncaster, taking full advantage of the jacuzzi, swimming pool and steam rooms.

The C2C was a brilliant event that I'm sure will be remembered by everyone involved. I hope that it will continue so that others can share the unique memories we did. The great thing about C2C was that it wasn't competitive, no one was racing or had anything to prove because it was a team effort and everyone played a part.

On behalf of the runners I would like to thank all the parents, teachers and supporters who made our achievement possible, and I would also like to congratulate the runners themselves.

**By David Good**





# 2003

# Coast 2 Coast



## The Team

Nolly Allerton  
Claire Mann  
Andy Peters  
Emmily Poole

Beth Rudling  
Sophie Knight  
James Nellany  
Mike Round  
Tim Than  
Diana Wassell



£0    £1,000    £2,000    £3,000

**Raised for  
Diabetes UK**

No amount of training could have prepared us for the amazing experience which the Coast 2 Coast brought with it. After a sleepless night of bewildering excitement for the entire squad, we left our overnight destination in St Bees and headed for the sea. At **6:00am** the team tie was dipped in the water along with ten pairs of toes and at that early hour in the morning courageous Claire Mann and Andy 'dustbin' Peters began our 190-mile run.

After the first half hour of glory, the run was passed on to tireless Tim Than and energetic Emmily Poole. Constantly trailed by the team minibus, the squad runners all took their turn to complete their first 30 minutes of running.

Team morale and spirit was felt by all. Beth 'ruthless' Rudling and Beth 'I'll B' Lyon displayed an extraordinarily strong partnership, encouraging one another where they found difficulty. James Nellany aka Lottie was unfortunate enough to face the misfortune of the towering Hardknott Pass. The mountain proved a difficult task for our boy wonder, but with endless team encouragement, he overcame its hurdles.

Luckily for me, my turn came just as he reached the top. Throughout the day the run proved tough, but chivalrous characters such as Nolly Allerton and Sophie Knight powered on relentlessly – it must have been all those bananas.

Complications did nevertheless occur. Mike 'Lucozade' Round decided to overdose on glucose tablets. With a little reorganisation of runners, the problem was swiftly overcome and after a few hours of TLC, Mike was back on his feet and things were looking up.

# 2003

It was when night fell that the struggles of stiffness and exhaustion began to make themselves apparent. Few people were pleased to be woken up at all hours of the morning, yet with brave faces and strong will, the running continued.

A mile from our final destination the entire team got out to complete the last run together. Upon stopping at the sign for Robin Hood's Bay, the inevitable emotion and total elation began to appear in both the staff and pupils. The steep run down into the bay concluded with an array of very proud parents and friends, many of whom had brought with them ample amounts of bubbly.



If there is one thing that I have learnt from this amazing achievement, it is the strength and motivation which can be brought by others and the huge amount of fun that can be had even when times are at their toughest. I would like to thank everyone who helped to contribute to the run - especially the parents and teachers who were with us all along the way. I would also like to thank those people who helped us to raise over **£3,000** for Diabetes UK. The Coast 2 Coast was an unforgettable experience, made possible by everyone working together.

***By Di Wassell***



# 2004

# Coast 2 Coast



Anna Browning  
Melissa Darby  
Tom Essex

## The Team

Luke Evans  
Tom Hingley  
Kaylie Jeavons  
Jack Parr  
Luke Sheldon  
Ashton Barnett-Vanes  
Paul Walton

£0    £1,000    £2,000    £3,000+

**Leukaemia  
Research UK**



After 16 weeks of training we were finally there - the real thing! Arriving on Friday afternoon at St Bees Head, a sleepy Cumbrian coastal town known to those in the nation's walking community as the start of Wainwright's Coast to Coast walk, everything happened in a bit of a daze. We settled into our boarding house, played a spot of very unimpressive football, then wandered with our support team down to the local hostelry.

At **6.45am** the next morning we were down at the beach car park preparing to sacrifice our toes to the freezing water of the Irish Sea. The rain lashed down and, although we had all hoped, prayed and been prepared to offer substantial bribes just so that we might get to run the first 30-minute leg, most of us were actually quite glad in the end that it was our very own Superman, Paul Walton, who would be getting wetter than a blue whale's underpants.

We ran according to the schedule. It was Paul's bad luck that he was one of the only runners to experience really heavy rain. It drizzled most of the morning until we reached the physically challenging one-in-three incline of Hardknott Pass. Jack Parr and Luke Sheldon, two of our strongest runners, pushed hard to keep going. The wind picked up, the rain followed suit and, tragically, Jack's hair was messed up! My first run came on the relatively flat build up to Hardknott; I had been quite lucky with the gradient and the weather – my hair survived! Result!



The runs seemed to become harder and harder, although as we moved out of Cumbria towards the Yorkshire Dales the weather improved considerably. The 'characters' in the team – Anna Browning and Mel Darby particularly, made things seem that little bit easier with their constant encouragement from the bus.

There was a good mood as we entered the Yorkshire Dales. After escaping relatively lightly in the earlier stages, I drew the short straw with the second of the monster hills - Birkendale. Even the minibus struggled! Anna then had a chance to run alongside her Dad, one of the vital support team. As we passed through the Dales we were all reaching the stage of needing the loo (as opposed to the nearest bush). Desperation may have led to Luke Sheldon's misunderstanding of the toilet procedure! After an emergency toilet stop, he returned to the minibus with rather too much in his 'rubbish' bag. Let's put it this way: Kingy wasn't best pleased and I'm afraid to say we left litter you wouldn't show your Mum on the side of that road.

Hingley decided to wake us all up with his ridiculous green shorts - there was no way he was not going to be noticed in the dark. Quite frankly, all you could do was laugh and congratulate him for having the guts to wear them. A time of stiffness, tiredness and moodiness came as nightfall fell upon us like a great dark thing. Most of the team only managed an hour or two of sleep. I'm sure I can vouch for the whole team by saying it wasn't particularly pleasant being woken up to run at three in the morning.

Lucky Anna bagged the third and final monster hill (at about **5:00am** - just when we were all at our best!) We started feeling we were closing in our target. Kaylie Jeavons ran the tie home, with the whole team running the last half a mile or so down the steep hill to the slipway at Robin Hood's Bay. As we approached the sea we were all, staff and students alike, physically drained but emotionally elated - a very odd combination of feelings.

Thanks go to my fellow team members for their effort and commitment put into both the training and the final run. It was apparent to me that some of the best times and funniest moments came when things felt the hardest. The support that both the students and teachers offered was incredible. It's one of the hardest things I have ever done. I would like very much to thank all those who made it possible – our sponsors (Brindley Motors, HSBC, Tesco, Price Waterhouse Coopers and Premier Sports), the teachers and our parents. Thanks also to anyone who gave us personal sponsorship; we raised a huge amount for our chosen charity, Leukaemia Research UK. The Coast 2 Coast Challenge was a great experience made even better by a great team working really well together.

**By Tom Essex**





# 2005

# Coast 2 Coast



## The Team

Andrew Gough

Molly Gromadzki

**Kay-Anne Ng**

James Roe

Rory Shanks

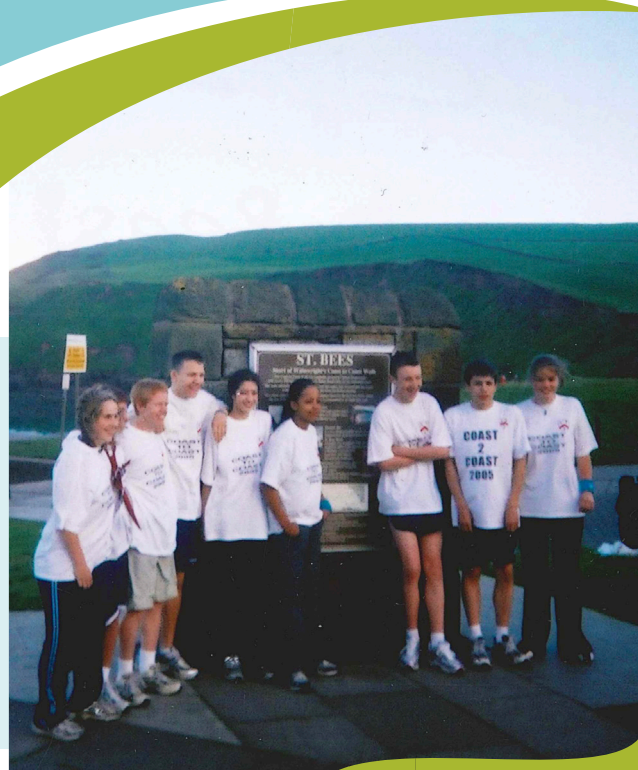
Josh Stanley

Cerys Bate

Nick Crisp

Georgia Fardon

Sarah Gibbs



On cold Thursday and Friday lunchtimes 30 Fourth Years came to the sports hall in order to take part in the Coast 2 Coast trials. Trials involved running around the Valley field as many times as possible and completing a questionnaire on why you thought you should be part of the team. Three days later, on the last Friday of the Christmas term, letters were sent out in registers informing those who had trialled whether they had made the team or not.

Early in February, just before half-term, our intense 16-week training course started. It was carefully designed to make sure that all of us would be fit enough to complete the challenge of running nonstop from coast to coast. A couple of weeks later the team received a huge blow when Kay-Anne Ng had to pull out due to a recurring hip injury. Despite this the team carried on and, although a few minor injuries occurred, the rest of the team made it into the final weeks. The week before we were due to go Josh Stanley picked up an injury to his leg and it was touch and go as to whether he would be able to run. Luckily, by the time the event came around, he was fit to run, although he had to be a bit careful.

On Friday 27th May we all came into School really excited, if not slightly nervous at the daunting task ahead. The teachers coming with us were Mrs Dalzell, Mr Johnson, Mr King, Dr Hinchliffe, Tom Johnson, Dr Bradley, Dr Trafford and Mr Johnstone. When we reached St Bees Boarding School everyone was tired and so after a meal at the local pub and a bit of TV everyone headed off to bed. The first runners Nick and Cerys had to be up at **5.30am** the following morning so they could eat before running at **7.00am** and **7.30am** respectively.

When everyone had eaten and the minibuses were packed up, we headed down to the beach which was about a two-minute drive from the boarding house. It is traditional for the runner whose parents are driving the support vehicle to run first so this fell to Nick. As we all dipped our feet into the freezing sea, Nick dipped the School colours tie and we all counted down to 7 o'clock. As it came Nick and Mrs Dalzell headed off through St Bees' village on the first leg of our mammoth relay.



We were very lucky with the weather, apart from our resident pirate Molly, who managed to get one of the toughest parts of the course which just happened to be the only time it rained in the entire run.

After an eventful night with very little sleep for us all, apart from Mr King, spirits were still high. A few hundred lucozades and too many bowls of Mrs Dalzell's pasta and sauce later, Robin Hood's Bay was in sight. As we all ran the last stretch together as a team, down the steep cobbled road to the beach, we knew it was almost finished.

Real tiredness was just beginning to set in. However, when we reached the bottom of the hill and all the parents were there waiting for us, it was a fantastic pick-me-up. Luckily for us the tide was right in, so it was easy to dip toes and the School tie, our relay baton, into the east coast sea - the mark of having completed the Coast 2 Coast Challenge. After Josh soaked Mrs Dalzell and most of the other teachers with champagne, we all headed to the Boathouse Bistro for a celebratory fry up.

Afterwards, we made our way up the very steep hill (walking this time) back to the minibuses and tidied them up before making our way to Hellaby Hall near Rotherham for further celebrations. After a well-deserved sleep and relaxing swim we went to TGI Fridays and had a lovely meal with our families and teachers, not forgetting to drink plenty of the famous Coast 2 Coast cocktails at the celebratory evening meal! This was a fitting end to a memorable weekend.

We would like to thank Mrs Dalzell for making it all possible with all the planning she put in as well as all the other teachers who were involved. Thanks also to Dr and Mrs Crisp for help with the support vehicle (without them the event would not have been possible) and to all the other parents and families who came to support us. This was a fantastic experience that we would urge everyone to try out for and perhaps be given the chance to take part.

**By Cerys Bate and Molly Gromadzki**



# 2006

# Coast 2 Coast



Chris Apperley

Mark Cartwright

Lucy Crane

Michael McEwen

## The Team

Sam Jones

Dan Lopez

Lydia Parr

Liv Price

Sunil Randev

Parick Norton-Uhl



£0    £2,000    £4,000    £5,185

Children's Liver  
Disease Foundation



The team for this year's Coast 2 Coast consisted of Lucy 'long-legged' Crane, Lydia 'hairy' Parr, Sam 'too many blonde moments' Jones, Liv 'never stopped smiling' Price, Michael 'stinky' McEwen, Sunil 'speedy' Randev, Patrick 'God, how can he be so fit?' Norton-Uhl, Dan 'sleeps anywhere' Lopez, Chris 'sweety' Apperley and Mark 'unlucky' Cartwright. Before the actual event we had 16 extremely tough weeks of training throughout which we all became much closer and the nicknames above were created. Unfortunately, Mark 'unlucky' Cartwright had to drop out after a few weeks of training as he broke his leg during a football match.

Before we knew it, we were travelling up to St Bees School on the Friday night of May half-term for the start of our Coast 2 Coast weekend. After a night of anxiety and excitement we all went to bed to get a good night's sleep before the challenge ahead of us.

Extremely early the next morning we were woken up to prepare ourselves for the day. Once the minibuses were loaded and Liv finally got out of the shower, we were all ready to go. We travelled to the beach and all nine of us ran into the freezing sea to dip our toes and the School colours tie which was our relay baton. Sam started the run doing the first 30-minute leg.

Regardless of the weather, we were all in good spirits with lots of encouragement being given to the team members who were running. Chris always seemed to have the ability to encourage everybody no matter how tired he was himself. We all ran to the schedule with many parents supporting along the way. We travelled through Cumbria where the place Cockermouth seemed to amuse some of us a little too much (McEwen).



Our stronger runners, including Patrick, Sunil and Dan, had to tackle Hardknott Pass (a 30% incline) with Patrick running the steepest leg. The remainder of us travelled around this horrendous hill in the minibus (the gradient of Hardknott was too steep for the bus to go over the top) and Sam's mum and dad stayed with the runners and Mrs D in their big four-wheel drive. It was at this point that those unfortunate enough to be left in the minibus experienced Mr Phillip's rally driving! As Dan and Dr Bradley came over the brow of Hardknott they were greeted by Lydia on a toilet stop! Everyone else had managed to at least find a bush to go behind.

The sun came out later in the day just as Michael realised he had an immense hill to run up. The look on his face definitely showed how he was feeling about it. Despite the challenge ahead of him, he managed to keep up a now time-honoured tradition. This involved removing his t-shirt and for this run he decided to wrap the tie around him and under his armpit (not particularly pleasant for whoever would have the tie after him).

As night drew in all of us were starting to feel the strains yet we still didn't know the worst was yet to come. Miss Martin was cycling along most of the runners throughout the night and she very much suited the fluorescent jackets we had to wear! Getting up in the middle of the night when we all already tired was not the best feeling and then realising that you had to run for 30 minutes ... well! A few tears were cried as some of the girls were not feeling their strongest yet the support and encouragement from Mrs Dalzell was immense and she never seemed to tire!

We were all awake when the sun rose and Mike had managed to convince Hinchy to follow his 'no shirt' tradition the next morning. A few locals had quite an early morning surprise! As we approached 24 hours on the clock, we were drawing closer to Robin Hood's Bay. With about a mile to go we all ran together up the last hill. When we saw the Robin Hood's Bay sign a huge amount of achievement swept over us. We all ran down the hill to the slipway where all of our families were waiting to congratulate us with bottles of champagne! We ran into the sea and Liv dipped the tie in to it to mark the end of our run. We were all exhausted yet felt immensely content as we had achieved this challenge in just over 24 hours. The feeling of completing this run was just astounding and we were all ready for our massive breakfast.

Later that night we went to TGI Fridays and celebrated in style! The traditional Coast 2 Coast cocktail was served up again. Songs were sung, games were played and Mr Phillips and Mr Millichamp went home with a bit of a soaking.

Overall, Coast 2 Coast was an incredible experience which all of us will definitely never forget. We had some hilarious moments and strenuous times. We ran with people who we hadn't previously been close to and we became part of a close-knit team. It was one of the hardest challenges we had ever faced but as a team we all overcame it with a great sense of achievement. We chose to raise money for the Children's Liver Disease Foundation and we managed to raise over **£5,000!** A massive thanks goes to Mrs Dalzell as she always pushed us to our limits and made this whole experience possible. Huge thanks also go to all of the other staff involved during training and the actual run including Mr and Mrs Jones for driving the support vehicle and all the other supporting parents and families.

*By Lydia Parr and Lucy Crane*



# 2007

# Coast 2 Coast



Emily Crane  
Will De Ville  
Raj Samra

## The Team

Chris Tutton  
Oliver Wagstaff  
Liv Ward  
Oliver Webb  
Sophie Whiting  
Rhian Wright



£0      £2,000      £4,000      £6,427

**Muscular  
Dystrophy Campaign**

Unfortunately, during the early stages of training Rhian received a nasty knee injury which forced her to adapt her training programme so she would be able to cycle the event as running was out of the question. There were a few other injuries but fortunately none so damaging that the runner needed to be withdrawn. Oscar shares his account of the ninth WGS C2C Challenge:

The 16 weeks of training prepared us physically for the massive challenge that awaited, but nothing could have prepared us mentally for this non-stop event from St Bees Head in Cumbria to Robin Hood's Bay in Yorkshire. After an anxious night's sleep the whole team, including many parents, congregated on St Bees beach to dip toes and the relay baton in the sea. Em set off like a rocket up and out of St Bees and the first few hours of the relay seemed to pass very quickly. During this time Oli Wagstaff completed the horrendous Hardknott Pass, a hill so steep the minibus had to bypass it. Luckily for me Oli had almost completed this monster when it came to my turn. Will and Oli Webb had both dressed as the 118 118 runners and were sporting a large amount of fake curly hair. They had one run together just beyond Ambleside and here their aim was to tell as many people as possible that, "We've got your number!" They managed to receive around 20 honks from passing motorists!

As dusk approached the tiredness set in (and maybe a touch of madness) for our conversations resorted to rating trees on their 'climbability' factor, ten being the best. And then came the night. Perhaps this was the stage we were most apprehensive about and running in the dark was indeed a surreal experience. As light returned we realised that we had almost done it. Finally seeing the sea was incredibly uplifting. This was Miss Martin's final Coast 2 Coast and we wouldn't let her back in the bus until the end. I'm sure after this she feels the need for revenge as she seemed to be running without a break for almost two hours.



# 2007

With a mile to go, all the runners piled out of the bus to start running as a group and all that could be heard for a couple of minutes was, "Ow, ow, ow". Our bodies were certainly feeling the strain. However, when we were finally greeted by the Robin Hood's Bay sign, the pain disappeared and a huge feeling of achievement and relief swept over the team.

We were met at the beach by the supporting families and a very large bottle of bubbly. Best of all was the full English breakfast that was enjoyed by all in the Boathouse Bistro. In the coach home we sang songs but were soon happily tucked up in bed feeling pretty shattered after our busy weekend.

Coast 2 Coast was a fantastic experience, one that none of us will ever forget. A massive thanks must go to Mrs Dalzell who gave us a huge amount of encouragement throughout the training and organised the event flawlessly. All the other staff must also be thanked and so should the parents who showed so much support, especially Mr and Mrs Crane who drove the support vehicle throughout the night.

We decided to raise money for the Muscular Dystrophy Campaign: a very deserving charity that seemed appropriate since many people who suffer from muscular dystrophy could not attempt a challenge like this. In total we have raised an amazing **£6,426.65** for the MDC, breaking a new Coast 2 Coast record.

**By Oscar Williams**



# 2008

# Coast 2 Coast



## The Team

Corrado Manzai  
Jordan Moxey  
Mollie Parr  
Ajay Sharma  
Luke Tatton  
Alec Walton  
Jenny Wilson

Georgina Baker  
Freya Husselbee  
Daniel Jones



£0    £3,000    £6,000    £8,305

**Motor Neurone  
Disease Association**



After intense trials including a 30-minute run, ten runners were chosen to run the 192 miles from St Bees to Robin Hood's Bay. Sixteen weeks of training followed until, on 23rd May, after Corrado had been awarded the 'Worst Coast2Coast Hair Ever' by Dr Trafford, we made our way up to St Bees in Cumbria where our epic journey would start.

We spent the night in a very comfortable St Bees School boarding house and, after playing some top-class football which saw Ajay get hit where it hurts most (twice), we visited a nearby chip shop for our incredibly healthy preparation meal, after which we returned to the dormitory full of excitement and trepidation.

The following morning dawned mild but grey and fears of the run being a washout were rife. However, we made the two-minute journey to the beach where our challenge would begin. We all dipped our feet into the Irish Sea, accompanied of course by the ceremonial tie-dipping, before Alec started running. The sky immediately turned blue and the sun was shining which made looking at the map and seeing how far we had to go, a whole lot easier. The minutes seemed to fly by and we were making steady progress through Cumbria until the bus reached the monumental, three-in-one gradient, hill-cum-mountain that is Hardknott Pass. Some lucky runners were able to bypass it due to the fact that the minibus couldn't get over it whilst the unlucky few, Corrado, Georgina and Jordan, set off with the Walton family for their mammoth climb. I wasn't there but I know the determination and courage of those runners was inspirational - even looking at the photos makes me feel tired!



We were soon running through the beautiful countryside around Ambleside and Windermere; the sun was still out and the chorus of the Coast 2 Coast 2008 anthem *Living on a Prayer* was constantly being sung, although Freya's jokes still weren't funny, showing that we hadn't run for long enough yet. Dusk set in just as we were nearing halfway although it wasn't until around **9:00pm** that we reached the halfway point in Reeth. Running in the dark was a unique experience that I'm sure none of the runners or staff will ever forget. There is something incredibly up-lifting about not being able to see where you are going.

Some of us then went off in the support minibus to try and get some sleep which was made virtually impossible by the combined efforts of Mr King and me snoring - 'lions mating' was one description used. With the light beginning to return we edged our way towards the North York Moors and some of the hardest runs of the whole relay were those at around **4:00-5:00am** when we were barely awake and we had to find in each other the strength to carry on. Despite this, the mood on the bus was still decidedly cheery, if not a little crazed, and all of the runners could still listen to Freya's famed 'Cheesy Music' CD without being totally irritated which had to be a good thing.

We knew we were getting closer and we could almost feel the North Sea spray on our faces. Corrado once again found himself running up a huge hill with Dr Bradley after which I took over to carry the tie to the Robin Hood's Bay sign. We made the journey down the mercifully short hill together to be greeted by our fantastic parents who had ferried us around throughout the 16 weeks of training and had still managed to pop up at various points on the route and had prepared an excellent welcome at the bay. Exhausted but thrilled we had our breakfast at a nearby café before heading down to Rotherham and then onto TGI Fridays. Thanks to our residential entertainment managers Mr King and Mr Johnson, the night was brilliant and Ajay and Mrs Harris got a little more than they bargained for!

I would like to say an absolutely massive thank you to all the staff and especially Mrs Dalzell for giving all ten of us the best experience of our lives. Coast 2 Coast 2008 has finished and through it I made a whole new set of friends; it would have been impossible not to after everything we went through together. However, none of this would have had the same meaning if we weren't running in aid of a charity and this year we chose the Motor Neurone Disease Association which helps to support those who suffer with the devastating disease. So to all up and coming Year 10 students, I would say "Go on, JUST DO IT!"

**By Daniel Jones**



# 2009

# Coast 2 Coast



## The Team

Liz Bamford

Becci Braham

Jacob Cunningham

Molly Forsyth

Joe Foxall

Jeff Hunt

Fiona Jones

Zoe Stirling

Heather Soley

Zak Wilmot



**Money raised for Lymphoma Research Trust  
and Midlands Air Ambulance**

This year, we crossed the Lake District in the mist and rain, the Dales in warm sunshine, and the very scary North Yorkshire moors in pitch darkness.

The night before the run we gathered at Abbots Court, a St Bees School boarding house. Fish and chips for supper, a photo beside the C2C marker post in Whitehaven, and then to bed. Lucky Fi and I get woken up an hour earlier than everyone else (**5:00am**) as we are the first two runners. It's still dark outside, and breakfast is rather quiet. I think we're a bit nervous. The run begins on the beach in St Bees, and the team are watched by some early bird parents as Fi dips a School tie in the sea (this tie will be worn by each runner in turn). The rest of the team dip toes, and next thing we know it's begun. This is what we've been thinking about since December: this is why we came in for circuits every Tuesday at **7:30am** - it's happening now!

Personally, I find this energy of positiveness and adrenalin will get me through the next 24 hours. I think part of the challenge is keeping your confidence that you will be able to do it, and your body won't just stop halfway through. There is a lurking anxiety that you might let the team down. I think the fear of this happening is partly what keeps us going through training and supporting each other through the difficult bits.

In the bus, things are buzzing. Once you're out there and running, trying to spot Sellafield through the rain, there's a great feeling of being on your way. The energy that has been building up for 16 weeks is finally released, and it's an amazing feeling. No longer are we running routes we know alarmingly well - all this is new scenery, and who knows what will be around the corner.

Zoe and Jeff get to go up Hardknott Pass; the minibus can't handle gradients like that, so our wonderful support vehicle, driven by Ma & Pa Jones, goes up with them, and even that gets stuck.



All get out and push, and Mrs Dalzell, Miss Ward and Pa Jones get left on the top of Hardknott in horizontal sleet and have to run down it rather fast to catch up. Heather and Liz make light work of Wrynose Pass and to celebrate, the weather cheers up. Molly and Joe go past Lake Windermere, and Molly is running in her Grandad's old running top. Last year, Molly's Grandad sadly died of lymphatic cancer, and that is one of the reasons we have chosen to run for the Lymphoma Research Trust. Our other worthy charity is Midlands Air Ambulance.

We push on through the day and are helped along by a healthily stocked minibus, crammed with food on the shelves above our heads. We live on Mrs Dalzell's yummy pasta sauce (tuna, sweetcorn and celery or roast veg and tomato this year), with a frankly disturbing number of bananas stacked up at the back of the bus to keep us supplied with slow-release carbohydrates (it's very technical).

In the afternoon Zak has to run up a huge hill - it's so huge, paragliders are launching themselves off it. He is kept company by Dr Bradley, and we stop at the top to cheer them on. Earlier on Joe's travelling companion, who goes by the name of Mr Tedley, arrives by special delivery (parent courier) to keep him company. The esteemed Tedley keeps us company for the rest of the journey.

In the evening there is an idyllic plod through the Yorkshire Dales, with the sun making everything golden. We have a guest appearance from Egg-man - Mr Millichamp's alter-ego - who keeps Becci company when she runs in the evening, much to the amusement of all.

Darkness arrives, and Liz reveals this year's C2C fad: glowsticks. Soon the bus looks like the scene of a nuclear waste leak with people emitting disturbing colours. Mr Millichamp looks rather becoming in a pair of glowing green specs, and the whole C2C procession begins to look like a travelling light show, with glowing runners and flashing hazard lights. Coast to Coasting in the dark is quite a surreal experience - either in the warm, fogged-up bus following closely behind the runners, or trying to doze in the back of the sleeping bus (which leapfrogs the other bus by several miles and then stops, so some people can get some sleep). Running is weird - the flashing hazard lights on the bus and support vehicle are hypnotic, and you have a strange sensation of moving but not really going anywhere. To be woken suddenly from a fitful sleep and within a minute to find yourself running down some dark lane (you have no clue where - it's too dark to see) is a bit disorientating - especially if you haven't quite woken up. So, the night can be the hard part.

When things begin to get light, I think everyone feels relieved. We got through it. This is probably the most atmospheric time to be running - our strange procession moving through silent villages on the moors as the sky begins to turn pink. The sleeping bus goes around in a circle trying to find the other bus, but soon we are all reunited and ready for the final push. A couple of vile hills later, we finally see it - the sea! Before long, we're perched gleefully upon the famous Robin Hood's Bay sign. Then, to the sweet sounds of cracking joints and much 'ow/oo/ah' exclamations, we run down to the seafront to a large reception of parents, siblings and other supporters.

The tide is about half a mile out, and the 'beach' is actually a spreadeagled collection of pointy rocks and seaweed, but that doesn't matter. We pick our way through and eventually get to the sea and all dip toes, contributing some well-travelled St Bees sand to Robin Hood's Bay's ecosystem. Back to the Boathouse Bistro for a large full English fry-up - our first hot food since the fish and chips of two nights ago. Then it's off to our snazzy hotel to celebrate. It mustn't be forgotten that this was Mrs Dalzell's last time as the main superbrain behind C2C before she hands it on to Miss Ward, so we would like to say thank you to both of them for all the work they put in, and to all the other staff involved for making it such a memorable and unique adventure. Wow!

**By Jacob Cunningham**



2010

# Coast 2 Coast



Dillon Balaggan  
Alice Baldwin  
Eleanor Beech

## The Team

Rebecca Bradley  
Louise Brazenell  
Sam Commander  
Daniel Genner  
Tom Husselbee  
Abigail Jones  
John Parnell



£0    £1,500    £3,000    £4,300

Compton  
Hospice



From School, we travelled in the minibus up to St Bees, near to Whitehaven. We made up our camp beds in St Bees School sports hall then chilled out playing games in the hall. Our extremely healthy supper was a whale-sized fish and chips, followed by a quick few photos taken beside the C2C marker in Whitehaven. It was soon time for bed but I could hardly get any sleep. This was it; all those weeks and hours of training were about to pay off.

Abbie and I were woken up an hour earlier than everyone else at **5:00am**, as we were the first two runners in the relay. Miss Ward woke me when it actually felt like I was beginning to get somewhere in my quest of finding some sleep, but never mind. We had our breakfast and it was rather quiet; nerves were starting to kick in. The run itself began on the beach at St Bees, where some earlybird parents watched us dip our toes in the sea. Abbie, who had the daunting task of being the first runner; also dipped a School colours tie in the sea, which would act as our relay baton. Then suddenly the run began. In the bus the adrenaline grew and it was this which was going to give us the energy to get through the next 26 hours.

Before I knew it, the tie was handed over to me and I was now running with C2C newcomer Mr Hills on the bike beside me. The energy that had been building for 16 weeks was now released and I liked the way that I was no longer following the repeated routes that I knew so well but was in completely new and beautiful scenery. Soon we were at the foot of Hardknott Pass; the beast of all hills, which was tackled by Dan and Tom. The gradient was so steep that the minibus couldn't get up the hill. Therefore, we took a different route and planned to meet the runners at the end of another hill, Wrynose Pass.



Tom, Dan and Eleanor ran so fast over the hills that they beat the minibuses and their runs were over by the time we caught up, so Dan had to run again.

2010

Not long after this, Louis and I went past Lake Windemere and were accompanied by Mrs Harris. We were running along the path beside a busy road and got a few encouraging honks from passing cars. Throughout the day the team were kept going by the fully stocked minibus where the food that the Blakemore Foundation had provided for us was stored above our heads. I must have overindulged on Boost bars. We also had healthy pasta with sauces provided by Dr Hinchliffe and Mrs Dalzell, which were enjoyed by all.

Later I ran with Miss Ward and Miss Whitaker along a never-ending stretch of straight road. I felt like Forrest Gump! Soon Sam tackled Nateby Hill with Mrs Harris though the wind and rain forced her to retire before **5:00am**. Tom took over near the top, dressed as a banana to the amusement of all who had stopped to cheer at the top of the hill.

Darkness soon arrived and glowsticks were distributed amongst us. They were amazing and the minibus soon looked like a scene from a mid-eighties disco with people emitting bright funky colours from all angles. At this point, if you were not running, you were either in the running bus trying to stay awake for your turn or in the back of the sleeping bus trying to get some kip. Running was rather different at night. The flashing hazard lights of the Jones' car in front became hypnotic and you got the sensation of moving, but not actually going anywhere. I felt quite disorientated as I hadn't quite woken up properly.

Soon the horizon began to lighten; we were almost there. Dan's 'I'm shattered' hoodie described exactly how we were feeling. After courageous stints from the others, it was my last run. Eleanor and Dan accompanied me and we pushed our tired legs over the last few hills. Then it was time to hand the tie on to Dan and Tom for the very last leg. We could finally see the sea and were soon perched on the top of the famous Robin Hood's Bay sign in the t-shirts that the WGS Friends had kindly provided. We made our way down to be greeted by a fantastic reception from parents and siblings who were instrumental in supporting us through this experience. They too deserve a pat on the back. We made our way to the sea and dipped our sore toes, contributing some well-travelled St Bees sand to that of Robin Hood's Bay. Then it was into the Boathouse Bistro for a well-earned English breakfast.

We raised just over **£4,000** for Compton Hospice, a local charity that provides care and support for people with terminal illnesses and their families. Most of the team know someone who has been helped by the hospice and we thought that raising money for this charity would benefit people in Wolverhampton.

**By Dillon Balaggan**



# 2011

# Coast 2 Coast



## The Team

Matthew Anslow  
James Casewell  
Isobel Diment  
Ffyna Downes

Hannah Fellows-Cox  
Lawrence Green  
Sam Grew  
Grace Lawrence  
Wahab Malik  
Daniel Thomas



£0    £2,000    £4,000    £6,000

**Haematology ward  
at New Cross hospital**

On the 28th May, ten students including myself, set off to complete Coast 2 Coast 2011. We had trained for a lengthy 16 weeks all building up to this weekend. During the training, we completed many runs each week. Nearing the end of the training we had to endure three runs on a Friday, including one before school, at lunchtime and after school. Not forgetting hills training on a Monday after school and circuits before school on a Tuesday. The training was tough but provided a sense of achievement as we watched ourselves improve.

Nearing the weekend we were all anxious and a few of us were carrying injuries, we arrived at St Bees School which provided our accommodation for the Friday night. As we arrived at St Bees, we had a large satisfying meal of fish and chips on the coast and visited the beach, the place where we would begin the next morning. Later that evening we slept on the sports hall floor at St Bees and were awoken at **6:00am** to begin our running.

Dan Thomas was our first runner and as he left St Bees coast it was tipping down with rain. We each had a running order where we would either run with a partner or by ourselves throughout 24 hours. We ran through the night and into Sunday morning. On the minibus there was lots of food ranging from cold pasta to chocolate bars, all provided by the Blakemore Foundation. As we approached the dreaded Hardknott and Wrynose Passes, the Anslows and Caswells accompanied us as the minibus couldn't venture up the hills with the runners.

We were also given the opportunity to dress up in costumes when everyone was starting to feel worn out. This included avatars, Mr Bump, Batman, a fairy and Ironman. Covered in blue paint, costumes, feathers and tutus, we carried on our runs which lasted 30 minutes at a time. We used the School's honours tie as a baton. Dipped in the sea at St Bees it was passed on to each runner until we reached Robin Hood's Bay.



Many parents and supporters were situated at different points where they cheered us on and kept morale high. The night runs were some of the hardest, there were two buses, the running bus and the sleeping bus. Some of the team were sent to the sleeping bus to catch a few hours sleep before their next run. Waking up at the very early hours of Sunday morning was a challenge but something that had to be done. We also had to resort to peeing in deserted fields when there were no toilets open, which wasn't the most private of occasions!

Accompanying us on some of the runs were the teachers, which helped to keep us going. The Anslows also drove in front of the runners throughout the night to ensure we were protected from oncoming traffic and didn't feel alone; this helped a lot.

Approaching the morning, we were eager to reach our destination and even had to slow down as we had run too fast! Reaching Robin Hood's Bay gave us a sense of achievement we hadn't felt before, and as we ran down to the coast together greeted by family, friends and teachers, the honours tie was finally dipped into the sea, marking an end to this event which we had worked so hard for and a total of 190 miles was run between the team. A full English breakfast greeted us after the buses had been cleaned. Exhausted, dirty but full of accomplishment we got back into the buses and set off to the hotel. Knowing we had raised around **£6,000** for the Haematology ward at New Cross hospital, as a thank you for the care that they gave to Dan Thomas' dad before he passed away.

We arrived at the hotel, limping and drained; we checked into our rooms and went to relax in the pool and sauna. Eventually we got ready for the celebration meal with our supporters. A buffet of Mexican food was provided and after lots of speeches and congratulations, we headed back to School together in the bus. As we reached School a sense of sadness was present as all the training and hard work had come to an end. All in all, with the memories from Coast 2 Coast it was one of the best weekends of my life and I would encourage everyone to get involved.

**By Hannah Fellows-Cox**



# 2012

# Coast 2 Coast



Alex Buckham  
James Cawdell  
Josh Evan

## The Team

Roshan Jaku  
Kim Kandola  
Elliott McDowell  
Laura Robertson  
Ellen Stimpson  
Thomas Ward  
Alex Wilmot



**Autism West Midlands and the  
Muscular Dystrophy Campaign**

The whole experience began in February when the team was selected. Training began soon after, consisting of a variety of challenges - long and at time perpetuated runs: hill training, requiring more short burst effort and multiple runs on the same day to build up our stamina. This was our routine for almost three months and we became so engrossed in our training regime that before we had had chance to think about what exactly we were about to do, the weekend of the C2C run was upon us.

On Friday 1st June we set out for St Bees, arriving later on that day. In the nearby town of Whitehaven, we indulged ourselves in the finest fish and chips in the land (according to Mr Millichamp) and slowly began to realise what lay ahead. After our incredibly healthy preparation meal we headed to a fairground where Diamond Jubilee celebrations were fully underway.

The next morning emotions were running high and we were all excited about the event, with Laura Robertson and Ellen Stimpson adding to the excitement by wearing their fancy dress pirate outfits. The team had only 15 minutes to eat breakfast, pack our belongings away and head down to the beach where the run was due to start. We dipped our feet into the Irish Sea, accompanied by the traditional ceremony of dipping the tie before Alex W started off the run. As the morning wore on, we settled into the rhythm as everyone completed their first stint.

For Alex Buckham and Elliott McDowell, a punishing ordeal awaited, but one they were eager to tackle. The two biggest mountain passes (Hardknott and Wrynose) were looming.





Elliott started Hardknott pass and with the help of Josh's dad, Mr Evans, Elliott managed to almost reach the peak of the hill. Alex took over the mantle and shot down the other side of Hardknott pass and found himself up against Wrynose. This equally steep hill proved an equal match for Alex but he had the strength of will to best it. The sense of achievement after completing these two steep climbs was incredible.

The runs passed quickly and were very enjoyable during the afternoon until Roshan Jakhu and Tom Ward reached Nateby Hill, another punishing climb. Tom had severe back pains during this run but with his teammates running by his side for support, he battled on and finished his stint.

As night approached, the morale of the team began to drop, but we ran on through the darkness, with Rocky and Kim Kandola leading the way. We found an inner resilience that carried us through our (at first difficult) but eventually special nighttime runs. That said, the team really bonded during this time and we all felt peaceful as the refreshing night air brushed over us as we ran on.

At around **5:00am**, light began to appear and despite the freezing temperatures outside, the miles continued to tumble. James Cawdell and Josh Evans were pitted against some tough hills towards the end, as were Laura Robertson and Elliott McDowell. At around **9:00am** we saw a sign for Robin Hood's Bay – seven miles to go, which rejuvenated our spirits and energy. Eventually the bay came into view and we ran down to the bay as a team, joyous at the sight of our proud friends and families cheering us on.

Some 26 gruelling hours later, after dipping the tie into the sea again at the other end, everyone was welcomed into Smugglers Boathouse Inn for a well needed fry-up. Shortly after, we headed to Doncaster, where we all stopped at the Holiday Inn, relaxed by the pool and enjoyed a few hours sleep. Before we knew it, it was time to get ready for an evening meal which included many speeches from the teachers, and we were honoured to be presented with a quincentenary medal from JJ.

Coast 2 Coast has finished, and we have all made a new set of friends; it would have been impossible not to after everything we have been through together. However, none of this would have had the same effect if we weren't running for Muscular Dystrophy and Autism West Midlands. I would just like to say to anyone in Year 10 looking to take the challenge – just do it as the experience will be amazing! Finally we would like to say a big thank you to Mr Millichamp for giving all ten of us the best experience of our lives and also a big thank you to the rest of the staff for organising Coast 2 Coast 2012.

**By Kim Kandola, Alex Bukham and Elliott McDowell**

## A helping hand

As I only joined WGS this year, I did not have the opportunity to run Coast 2 Coast, so I offered to help with some of the training sessions for this year group (coincidentally my brother's year). I was very grateful when they actually allowed me to go on the trip. I went to support the team and be there to help if they needed anything but as it happened, I ended up running six legs with different people from the team and becoming the 'dinner lady', keeping both runners and staff well fed.

I thought Coast 2 Coast was a brilliant experience, even for me as a supporter to the team. It was especially good to see how well the team got on with each other and it was lovely to see them all encouraging each other when some were struggling. This contributed to it being an excellent team and a brilliant atmosphere on the bus. Even when we had to take a seven-mile detour due to a road closure, no one moaned and the team spirit stayed high even though everyone had to run a little bit further. I would recommend Coast 2 Coast to everyone because it is a brilliant experience and a once in a lifetime opportunity.

**By Lauren Evans**



# 2013

# Coast 2 Coast



## The Team

Tom Aston

Freya Cunningham

Luci Darrall

Alex Dmitrewski

Megan Griffiths

Jack Harris

Fran Hopson

Sally Parnell

Bex Roberts

Gurtej Randhawa

Andrew Shave



£0    £2,000    £4,000    £6,155

**Headway  
Black Country**

The charity the team chose this year was Headway Black Country which is a small charity based in Dudley serving the Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall and Wolverhampton area providing help and rehabilitation for people with acquired brain injuries. After the team was selected, we started our training regime, which was made up of a variety of exercises, including long, slow runs, circuits and three runs every Monday. However, a particular favourite of the team was hills training on a Thursday, run by Dr Bradley. This required short bursts of energy and was definitely the most challenging part of the training programme. As we became fitter and relaxed into our new schedule, the weeks leading up to the event flew by and before we knew it, Friday 24th May had arrived and we were packing up the minibus and heading up to St Bees. Our spirits were high, and we knew we were in for a great weekend.

When we arrived at St Bees School in Cumbria, the sun was shining and we unpacked our things and set up camp for the night on the sports hall floor, which was fun, if not a little uncomfortable. We had a healthy fish and chip dinner to prepare ourselves for the weekend ahead, and we strolled around St Bees to soak up the evening sunshine before getting into our sleeping bags and excitedly trying to get to sleep, with the thoughts of what was to come the next morning spinning around our heads.

The runners who start the event have to get up an hour earlier than everyone else, so Megan, Jack and I were awoken at **5.30am** by Mr Millichamp. After breakfast, we woke the rest of team, jumped on the minibus and headed down to the beach, where the start of the run would commence. Despite the early awakening, everyone was so happy and excited, and the gorgeous sunshine made the morning even more enjoyable. Megan dipped the tie in the Irish Sea, and the event was finally underway.



As the morning continued, we settled into our routine and got used to the minibus, which was to be our home for the next 24 hours. As everyone completed their first stint an even bigger obstacle was waiting for Alex and Andy. We approached the Lake District and the two toughest hills of the Coast 2 Coast route. Andy took the lead up Hardknott, and despite it being a 30 percent gradient for most of the way, he managed to reach the top, and Alex continued the stint up Wrynose. With the tough parts mostly out of the way, we continued our runs and the event was quickly passing by without us realising, but the real challenge for Gurtej, Alex and Bex was yet to be completed - the treacherous run up Nateby Hill. Gurtej took the first half of Nateby and the last push was finished off by Alex and Bex. Despite struggling, they reached the top and finished their stint.

As the night drew near, we knew the next part of the event would not be easy, and we kept up our morale by singing and encouraging each other as much as we could. Our nighttime support vehicle, made up of my dad (Stephen Parnell) and Paul Griffiths (Meg's dad) began to lead and we carried on into the darkness. It is at this time where the team really starts to make bonds which only someone who has experienced Coast 2 Coast can understand. As you're running in pitch black around you, with the sound of the minibus engine and nothing else, all you have is your team behind you and the finish line ahead.

As it became light, Robin Hood's Bay got closer and closer, and even though we were all tired and aching, we reached the finish line and dipped the tie in the sea! With our parents cheering us and our tired families waiting on the beach, we finally stopped running and had to cope with the surreal feeling that Coast 2 Coast had now finished. The massive feeling of relief swept over us as we realised we were done, but it was also sad because we had all become so much closer in the space of just 24 hours and everything was now over.

We had pushed ourselves to our limits and were definitely all ready for a long sleep and a shower by the end! We tucked into a tasty full English breakfast and made the journey to our hotel where we all relaxed our aching muscles in the jacuzzi and then had a meal with our families and the teachers.

Coast 2 Coast is one of the most challenging experiences most of us will ever have but it's worth every minute. However, we couldn't have done it alone, and on behalf of the team I'd like to thank Mr Millichamp, Dr Hinchliffe, Mr Crust, Miss McAllister, Mrs Mahey, Dr Bradley and JJ for making it all possible. We also had help in our training sessions from Mr Burden, Mrs Kingshott, Ellie Griffiths, John Parnell, Paul Griffiths, John Crawford and Sam Grew, and we couldn't be more thankful.

To any Year 9s who are considering trying out for Coast 2 Coast when they reach the trials in Year 10, I urge you to go for it, because it is an event that changes your life, and one that you won't forget. Coast 2 Coast brings you memories and friends and a once in a lifetime opportunity and anyone looking for something different who enjoys running shouldn't let Coast 2 Coast pass you by.

**By Sally Parnell**



# 2014

# Coast 2 Coast



## The Team

Dan Adams

Aaron Bachra

Hattie Barber

Joe Fellows-Cox

Manraj Dhillon

Bella Harris

**Holly Langston**

Amelia Lewis

Poppy Nabbs

Alice Nightingale



£0      £1500      £3,000      £4,943

**Birmingham  
Children's Hospital**



We travelled to St Bees School (stopping for a McDonalds on the way) where we made our camp beds on the stage of the assembly hall. We enjoyed a delicious fish and chip supper in Whitehaven followed by a relaxing stroll along the Whitehaven marina. It was soon time for bed, however I could hardly get any sleep as a combination of nerves and excitement started to kick in!

Alice and Amelia were unfortunate to be woken up an hour earlier than everyone else as they were the first two runners in the relay. After everybody was packed, prepared and the minibus was loaded we departed from St Bees School and headed for the starting point. Amelia, who had the daunting task of being the first runner, dipped the school tie (the baton) into the Irish Sea and got our adventure underway! Adrenaline was high on the minibus and we were all eagerly anticipating our first run.

The first few hours passed by swiftly, however for Manraj and Dan a punishing ordeal awaited, Hardknott Pass was looming, with a 30% gradient for much of it. With the support of the team, Manraj ploughed up the hill and managed to almost reach the peak of the hill before Dan took over the mantle and raced down the hill and found himself up against Wrynose which is equally steep. Dan also did brilliantly, to conquer 90% of the hill before Amelia reached the peak! The sense of achievement after these two steep climbs was incredible.

The runs passed quickly throughout the afternoon and were also very enjoyable as the scenery was incredible. As the evening drew upon us, several parents joined us as we approached Nateby Hill, which is another challenging climb. Poppy and Dan ran it as a pair in the pouring rain against the wind, which made it even more challenging, however the team were right behind them and they battled on to the finish line.



As the night approached, we ran on through the darkness, and our inner resilience carried us through our runs. There was a sleeping bus available for those who had just run; however it was difficult to fall asleep. Unlike others, my night runs were actually the ones I preferred and ran furthest in! We ran on as the refreshing night air brushed over us. Also, a big shout out to the Lewis' for their encouragement, they volunteered to be the night time parent support drivers!

At around **6:00am**, light began to appear, and our team spurred on. We were pitted against numerous challenging routes in the process and we soon saw signs for Robin Hood's Bay. Despite getting minimal sleep, our energy was renewed and the North Sea came into view upon the horizon. Ultimately, we reached the bay to the warm welcoming of a huge cheer from proud families and friends. We dipped the tie into the sea at the other end, a gruelling 26 hours later and were treated to a much needed fry-up at Candy's Café.

Afterwards, we headed to the Holiday Inn where we caught up on some sleep and relaxed poolside. Myself, Manny, Dan and Joe also ordered a large pizza each from the local Dominos which was heavenly. We later had an evening meal, which included many speeches and we were honoured to be presented with a medal, which I will treasure.

On behalf of myself and the team, I would like to say a massive thank you to everybody who made this event possible! It was a fantastic event which was life changing.

**By Aaron Bachra**

Coast 2 Coast has been running now for 15 years at WGS - an event unique to our School. The route is, of course, Wainwright's famous walking route, and many people now cycle it for charity but WGS is the only team running non-stop from coast to coast. The event has become a major fixture in the School calendar and places on the team are highly coveted.

More than just a physical challenge, Coast 2 Coast is a challenge of the mind - it really tests our youngsters to their limits and they have to rely heavily on inner strength and determination in order to conquer this demanding endurance event. Altruism is at the heart of this event and fundraising has been the central motivation of the youngsters taking part. This year's team raised a fantastic **£4,943.31** for Birmingham Children's Hospital and were recognised as one of their 'Hundred Heroes' amongst their top one hundred fundraisers of 2014.

Dr Hinchliffe, who has been a central figure throughout the history of the event enjoyed his final run this year as he moves onto his new school. We thank him and all the staff who make C2C possible.

This year as we waited in Reith for the 'running bus' to pass, a friendly young lady approached us, having spotted the livery of the school mini-bus. Sally Brown, who was in that inaugural group of fourth-formers with Miss McAllister, was in Reith, organising her wedding. She had so fallen in love with the landscapes of the region during her Coast 2 Coast run, that she returned to Reith 15 years later as the perfect location for her wedding!

**By Mr Millichamp**



# 2015

# Coast 2 Coast



Evie Bramley

Vinay Doal

Harry Hales

## The Team

Sophie Hickman

Mitchell Porter-Keel

Alex Sage

Saroop Sangha

Tom Steel

Imogen Wade



**Money raised for Dementia UK**

The first weekend of half term usually seems like a great opportunity to relax and catch up on some sleep. However, a team of dedicated Year 10 students were running across the country for Wolverhampton Grammar School's annual Coast 2 Coast relay run to raise money for Dementia UK. Tom remembers this life-changing experience:

C2C was a staple event of our time at WGS. We recall the anxious wait before running around the hockey pitch, what must have been at least a million times, as part of the process of being selected; followed by the anticipatory discomfort of learning whether you were in or out. This, on reflection, was the hardest part of the C2C journey, as the rest was overall amazing.

Many, many....like really an awful lot of running later, the moment had arrived. We had been fundraising for our chosen charity for months in the build-up to Coast 2 Coast, along with the daily 'beasting' doing runs, or circuits, or even worse - hills training.

On arrival at St Bees, there was a customary visit to a pretty decent fish and chip shop – I forgot to ask for curry sauce, a cardinal sin - nevertheless it was a bangin' chippy. We stayed in a porta-cabin at St Bees School, all in sleeping bags raring to go on the night before kick-off and all the hard work felt worth it – not least because we had a few days off training before hand in preparation.

I vividly remember dunking the school tie into the surprisingly chilly waters of the Irish Sea, a baton not dissimilar, except in appearance, to the Greeks' Olympic torch! And off we went....



The start of the challenge was exciting, we piled into a minibus stockpiled with inordinate amounts of pasta and drinks to keep our engines running while taking on the journey. There was cheering of people who came to watch us leave, cheering from the bus and smiles all around – spirits were high!

Fast forward maybe 9 hours or so the going was still good as the dim light faded into the backdrop of rolling hills, and the cold night began. Nighttime running feels like you are running faster and a dynamite blast run through a small village in, I have no idea where, lifted spirits further.

I also fondly remember running on what I thought was flat ground at around 3am, to find in the morning JJ telling me I did well last night on the 30 minutes of pure steep climb. I'm sure I took this as a boost with JJ thinking I knew what I was doing, however, the truth is I just couldn't see from the darkness and the rain that I was on a hill.

Being part of the team through the thick and thin, the niggling injuries, the exhaustion and the hardship was amazing. The feeling of accomplishment when all the training and hard work paid off and we made it through as a unit is almost indescribable. As we crossed the finishing line in Robin Hoods Bay to a thunderous roar of people cheering us on in the sopping rain, a smile was beaming on everyone's face – we had completed it!

Overall the experience was full of absolute enjoyment, incredible hardship, a lot of sweat, a couple of blisters, and a sense of achievement that will last a lifetime.

***By Tom Steel***

Nathan Burden who led this year's challenge said "The months of relentless training paid off and we arrived in Robin Hood's Bay just twenty-four and a half hours later – a new school record for our route. Huge congratulations to the team, and many thanks to all the staff and parents who supported the event."

In the initial C2C trips, map reading was essential as the drivers did not have the benefit of mobile apps used today. Head torches to read laminated maps and written instructions at nighttime inevitably led to the team to straying off route and contributed to evolution of the C2C route used nowadays.

Miss McAllister was stopped in her tracks leaving Gosforth towards Eskdale by a flock of sheep!.

# 2016

# Coast 2 Coast



## The Team

Joshua Bradshaw

Richard  
Hakeman-Ellison

Oliver Evans

Will Gibbons

Georgia Harris

Dan Mason

Jamie Millichamp

John Steel

Loveday Thompson

Jake Thompson



£0      £2000      £4,000      £6,300

Neuroblastoma UK

John, himself remembers feeling a sense of pride and terror having been chosen to run up Hardknott Pass which was one of the more difficult and daunting legs of the run. "I was relieved after what felt like hours of hard sweat to get to the crest of the...mountain (is what I'm going with) only to find it was a speedbump and the climb continued. The pain swiftly dissipated and turned to joy however, as we heard the cheers from the team and supporters as we re-joined the minibus on the main road."



Coast 2 Coast 2016 was run by in memory of Mr Owen Davies a beloved Chemistry teacher who sadly passed away following a battle with Neuroblastoma. Through our fundraising and sponsors, we helped raise over **£6,300** for Neuroblastoma UK in his honour.

Neuroblastoma UK help to fund research projects to develop new treatments for children with Neuroblastoma and when one of us suggested the charity, as the best way we could honour such a wonderful teacher.

Our journey to the challenge itself was stuck with lots of traffic and KFC, and last minute trips to get sugar from the supermarket, as well as basketball and football while all of us tried to sleep on a most uncomfortable sports hall floor.

Before the training started most of the group didn't really speak but as a team we really bonded, through Coast 2 Coast. A memory we all fondly remember was when Dan was struggling to run up Nateby, he was joined by John at the last bit and he was greeted with a big welcome by the rest of the team at the top.



Our experience of the run included a few people falling over and getting back to the minibus with cuts all over them, throwing-up on the tops of hills from exhaustion, a vehicle ending up in a ditch (but luckily it got out!), food poisoning from KFC, as well as practically being thrown cereal bars and pasta to eat between legs. We truly had an interesting and unforgettable experience - I am sure one of us made a mockumentary style vlog at one point about it!

There was a road closure on the way to MealBank but Mr Cooney who was accompanying Will Gibbons on his bike, went ahead to see if there was enough room to squeeze a runner through the roadworks. Indeed there was, so Will ran on with Mr Cooney whilst the minibus had to take a 15-minute detour via Kendal. When the bus rejoined the route there was no sign of Francis or Will as they had taken a wrong turn! Luckily by the time Will's Dad arrived to watch the run both the missing parties had appeared and there was no need to explain that we had temporarily lost his son!

I am sure a lot of us will not forget being absolutely shattered in a breakfast bar in Robin Hood's Bay once we had completed the run, with Scott Thompson (Jake's father) blasting House music from his phone at about **8:00am** in the morning, which followed on from Scott's very vocal loud mouthing that he was giving everyone on each leg.

We ran the challenge in just under 26 hours, and considering we ran a large chunk of it the wrong way, we did pretty well. We were also highly disadvantaged as we broke the tradition passing on a school tie and instead wore a massive orange cape often worn like a massive baby's bib, with the Neuroblastoma logo on, which was passed on as a baton to each runner.

Our evening celebration and presentation ended up with all of us outside playing with a tennis ball and football in our fancy suits and dresses and we were all barging each other causing chaos in the grounds of the really quite nice hotel. You would have thought we wouldn't have had the energy, but we somehow did!

We were extremely lucky to have such supportive family and friends who we would not have been able to complete the challenge and all of the training without, especially all the family who ran or biked with us during training and the run itself.

**By Loveday Thompson**



# 2017

# Coast 2 Coast



## The Team

Amrit Gakhal

Seb Jones

Jordan Russell

Nina Sidhu

Ed Bill

Harry Calloway

Theo Crewe-Read

Harry Froggatt

Anya Stojanovic

Freya Thompson



£0    £1,500    £3,000    £4,619

Adoption UK

Ten students and a convoy of support staff completed the annual Coast 2 Coast challenge in May.

I think if you asked any of the ten of us that did Coast 2 Coast, they would all give you the same response. The training was hell but it was totally worth it. 16 weeks of training. Sometimes three runs a day. All for 26 hours of running... 187 miles let's not forget. C2C was always something I saw the older years do and I knew even in Year 7, that I wanted to be given the chance to run it. For all ten of us, it has been the most amazing and surreal experience and definitely the highlight of our time at WGS.

We camped out at an abandoned school the night before the run and after chatting to the team 5 years on, the one thing we all remember is the tuna pasta bake that someone made which went warm in the first 5 minutes of the 4 hour drive up to St Bees – so we had no food, well apart from the cous cous Jordan seemed to devour! They should have told us we were getting ice cream for breakfast when we finished...

Freya started the run at **7:00am** by dunking the tie in the sea and off we went! No one could have told us what we were getting ourselves into... and would we have believed them? I remember it being an extremely hot day but that did not seem to bother us, we were ready to take on the challenge. There are too many memories to include in just this, but none of us will forget Nina running up the wrong hill and only being told when she got to the top, or Froggie being able to run faster than the minibus up Hardknott Pass, or the toilet situation on parts of the run...



The run got hard by dawn the next day when the adrenalin started to wear off and we were all beyond tired. However, it was the teamwork of 10 kids that got us through that day. The kindness of someone saying, “don’t worry I got you, I’ll do your run” when you were absolutely exhausted, or all of us running the last few miles together, motivating each other to keep running and complete it as a team. Because when we look back, that’s what we were. A team. And a really good one.

If you are reading this and you haven't reached Year 10 yet then please please, please give it a go. It will definitely be hard and at points you will think 'Oh my why did I decide to do this', but trust me, it's the best thing I ever did at my time at WGS and I would not change it for the world.

***All our love,  
The year of 2017 x***

**JJ recalls:**

On this route we were faced with a potential nightmare as the turn to Nateby was greeted with a 'road closed' sign. A detour was not really an option in terms of running as it would mean driving a loop of 60 minutes. One of the parents drove a bit further on and returned to say that although there was a small stretch of road where the surface was damaged (the reason for closing the road), he thought there was enough room for a minibus to pass. The Head, Kathy Crewe-Read was present, and gave us the go ahead to continue. There was just enough room to get the minibus through to everyone's relief!

Following 17 weeks of gruelling training to follow Wainwright's famous 187 miles walking trail over three spectacular National Parks (the Lake District), Yorkshire Dales and North Yorkshire Moors. Ten students, all aged between 14 and 15, completed the challenge in 26 hours, raising money for Adoption UK and proudly presented a cheque for **£4,619** to Becky Guest from the charity.



# 2018

# Coast 2 Coast



## The Team

Jed Hathaway  
 Sam Jones  
 Oliver Mason  
 Dominic Sage  
 Ben Ward  
 Tom Wainwright

Lizzie Anderson  
 Sophie Alexander  
 Serina Basra  
 Katie Evans  
 Adam Gregory



£0    £1000    £2,000    £3,344

**Promise Dreams**

Promise Dreams is a national charity with the sole aim of helping terminally and seriously ill children to have their dreams turned into a reality. Whether they would like to spend some time with their family following a prolonged hospital stay, the chance to meet their favourite celebrity, a specialist trike so that they can join in on family bike rides, or house adaptations to make day-to-day life that little bit easier, Promise Dreams are committed to help.



This year's team broke the school C2C record and completed the challenge in 24 hours.

Coast to Coast, what an experience! Our team worked together tirelessly from day one, facing the challenges of running head-on, no matter what those 17 weeks of training and a final 24 gruelling hours threw at us. Surprisingly, we didn't know each other very well when we started, but as months of training went by, we formed an unbreakable bond that can never be forgotten. Whether that was offering support at school or taking on massive hills together, we had each other's backs. We made lifelong friends and shared unforgettable memories that most students could only imagine. Coast to Coast brought us together, allowing us to achieve something truly remarkable whilst also raising funds for Promise Dreams.

We dedicated ourselves to early morning training sessions multiple days a week before school started, along with many during and after the school day. It was a shared commitment with sweat, pain and tears that brought us together, and I'm certain that as we grow older, the memories of those times will remain with us forever. In many years to come we all will remember how much fun we had and how hard we worked to achieve what we accomplished.



We must thank Mr. French particularly, our relentless coach, as he really pushed us to our limits and brought the very best out of every one of us. In years to come I'm sure we will still be able to hear his voice somehow convincing us that doing another 20 push-ups was somehow a good idea. And a massive thank you to Mrs Birt and everyone who was involved in making the whole experience what it was and so special. It wouldn't have been all that it was without each and every person who helped us train, cheered us on or donated to the charity of our choice.

As amazing as this all sounds, it was obviously not all smooth sailing, we definitely had our fair share of injuries and times of extreme tiredness. However, what is so great about C2C is the community and friendship it builds, with us all supporting each other through those harder moments. It is those times that you want to give up in the moment but can look back on and be proud of yourself and the team for pushing on and getting through it.

There are so many experiences, each unique to each person involved and that is what Coast 2 Coast is all about. I'm certain that every one of us could tell you so many funny and unforgettable memories we've made and not many people will ever achieve something as incredible as we all have. Running side by side, from one side of the country to the other with all the support and encouragement from friends, family and the amazing staff organising the whole event. It is an experience we will never forget.

***By Lizzie Anderson & Ben Ward***

**Need more images**

# 2019

# Coast 2 Coast



## The Team

Oliver Brookes  
Kate Fitzpatrick  
Katie Goodridge  
Cian Gopal  
Rohan Gupta

Joshua Harris  
Charlie Hesson  
Elizabeth Marshall  
Anya Rogers  
Beth Seager  
Zac Taylor



£0      £2,000      £4,000      £5,115

**Sparks Charity**

The 2019 team ran C2C in just 23 hours and 6 minutes to raise vital funds for the charity Sparks. Sparks is a charity funding ground-breaking research into a wide range of conditions affecting children. These include childhood cancers, spina bifida, muscular dystrophy, infant brain damage, club foot and the risks associated with premature birth. Their pioneering projects are carried out at leading hospitals and universities throughout the UK, making significant contributions to breakthroughs and new treatments.

2019



2020

# Coast 2 Coast



## The Team

Ewan Alexander

Jenny Chan

Harry Davies

Ella Grew

Ed Hamill

Grace Jones

Rosie Thacker

Benjamin Thomas

Thomas Watson

Harry Williams



£0    £3,000    £6,000    £7,720

Brain Tumour  
Support

COVID-19 did not stop this year's Coast 2 Coast team from completing the incredible challenge of a gruelling relay. Restrictions meant that 170 miles were covered over two days in October half term, over a specially designed 7.5k circuit covering Cannock Chase. Students had to complete 20 laps on both the Saturday and Sunday between **7.30am** and **7.30pm** – all in aid of Brain Tumour Support.

The C2C training schedule had started as usual in February 2020 when we went into COVID lockdown. The team had to keep up their training individually at home and their progress was tracked on Strava. Mr French and Mrs Harris mapped out the training schedule to ensure the team were on track and to make sure they were ready should we come out of lockdown at any point. This continued from March 2020 to when students returned to school in September.

On return to school the year groups were in 'bubbles' and because the C2C team were all in the same year it was possible to train together. At that time, no residential trips were allowed for schools by DfE guidance, but you could have outdoor daytime trips. A plan was formed for the C2C Challenge to take place over 24 hours – albeit over two days, going home with parents on the Saturday night and returning the following morning. on C2C.



On arrival parents kept socially distanced and a 'base camp' was set up for the students to congregate in their bubble. Everyone had been regularly testing for COVID in the lead up to the event and COVID protocols and risk assessments for both WGS and Cannock Chase Birches Valley meant a lot of extra paperwork this year! This year we also had two school ties due to the need to sanitise at the end of each student run rather than handing directly over to the next runner. The team each ran a 7.5km route through Cannock Chase accompanied by a member of staff or by their parents, as is the normal tradition.

Unfortunately, we could not have the usual celebration dinner with parents because of the COVID restrictions in place at the time. However, the students and some staff did have a small outside celebration in the Upper Pavilion at WGS.

Thanks to the support of Cannock Chase Forest, Birches Valley and Grounds Café and Cycle Centres we were able to still go ahead with this year's challenge, despite the strangest of circumstances. In doing so, Year 11 students Ewan, Harry, Edward, Benjamin, Thomas, Harry, Jenny, Ella, Grace and Rosie raised an astonishing **£7,720**.

### **'Rest of the WGS' C2C**

Additionally, this year in order to keep the WGS community connected and to help motivate our C2C team, we also ran a 'Rest of WGS' Coast 2 Coast Challenge. Junior School, Senior School students and staff were invited to run a virtual challenge between March 2020 and June 2020, to see how many times the School could run from St Bees to Robin Hood's Bay collectively.

A Lockdown 2020 Challenge t-shirt for the three top distances covered was awarded to Charlie Hamill in the Junior School, Oliver Andreae in the Senior School and to Mr Brookes, one of our WGS parents. The challenge really united the WGS community and collectively we managed to cover an incredible 1,066.15 miles!





# 2021

# Coast 2 Coast



## The Team

Harry Brookes

Jaiya Daley

Bella Evans

Jack Goodridge

Leah Gopal

Tom Hathaway

Freddie Hodgetts

Sahara Kandola

Dhiren Lalli

Isabelle Mason

Max Thompson

Ava Wainwright



£0    £2,500    £5,000    £8,087

The Haven

The annual C2C Challenge made its rightful return to St Bees after restrictions meant that the 2020 challenge had to take place closer to home at Birches Valley, Cannock Chase. Each of the 12 team members took it in turns to run 30-minute intervals and as a tag team they completed the course in 25 hours 42 minutes starting on Saturday 29th March and finishing in the early hours of Sunday 30th March 2021. Max looks back at his experience:

When the initial team was picked I was excited to be a part of that selection along with 11 other great runners. The training was 12 weeks long and it was as hard as it comes, we were running 5 times a week and doing 2 circuits, at the time I thought this was an excessive amount of training but I soon realised I underestimated how hard Coast 2 Coast would actually be. When running C2C you're pushing yourself beyond limits in both a mental and a physical way, this challenge is very mentally challenging because it feels like when you're running everything is hurting and tired. At some points I felt like stopping but obviously like everyone on the team I persevered throughout the challenge.

Finishing Coast 2 Coast was one of the most surreal things, running down that hill and seeing my family along with the teachers and other families was a brilliant experience. The experience helped me in many ways, obviously in the aspect of fitness and my health but it also helped me learn new qualities about myself. Also another benefit is that Coast 2 Coast brings a team of people who maybe aren't extremely close before, much closer, and every team member motivates one another through the tough times. I was one of the best experiences I've been through and will stay with me throughout my whole life.

**By Max Thompson**



# 2021

The 2016 team set an initial fundraising target of **£3,000** in aid of The Haven Wolverhampton, which provides practical and emotional support services to women and dependent children who are vulnerable to domestic violence, homelessness and abuse. In awe of their determination and achievement, members of the School community, family and friends helped them to raise a phenomenal fundraising total of over **£8,000** – a new WGS Coast 2 Coast record!

Jade Secker, Fundraising Manager at The Haven Wolverhampton said: “We are so grateful for the incredible support from the team of Year 10 Students at Wolverhampton Grammar School who took on their Coast 2 Coast challenge in aid of The Haven. The updates on social media throughout the 24 hours showed just how much hard work and effort the team had put into training and how much they were all striving to do their absolute best to complete the challenge with flying colours and raise as much as possible for the women and children we support.

Together, they have raised a staggering **£8,000** to support our vital work and we could not be more grateful to every single student who took part. A donation of this kind could cover the cost of 4,000 emergency calls to our helpline. For many women, this is their first brave step away from abuse and is very often lifesaving.

Everyone at The Haven Wolverhampton would like to say a huge thank you to the team of Year 10 students for their amazing support – we hope you are all super proud of yourselves for the incredible difference your support will make in the local community.”



# 2022

# Coast 2 Coast



Sachi Bhambra  
Luke Hemmings  
Mason Holles

## The Team

Caleb Laing  
Nacardo Lewis  
George Margetts  
Kyla Robinson  
Jasraaj Sandhar  
Elliot Woodall



£0      £3,000      £6,000      £7,550

Teenage  
Cancer Trust



This year our Coast 2 Coast team which was a slightly smaller group than usual, were given an extra boost by a family friend of the team, who came to see the minibus depart from School. Morgan, who was treated for Leukaemia and supported by the Teenage Cancer Trust and Birmingham Children's Hospital, buoyed the team by explaining what a difference their support would make to others like him, through raising vital funds for this important charity. During the course of the challenge, the team more than doubled their fundraising target for Teenage Cancer Trust and received messages of support online from Teenage Cancer Trust Northwest & Cumbria. An amazing total of **£7,550** was raised. Mason looks back on the trip:

On the 28th of May, a group of nine students started the fabled Coast 2 Coast Challenge. After 16 long weeks of vigorous training, we were more than ready! As a team, we decided to pick the Teenage Cancer Trust as our charity. It was essential to us that the money we raised was going to a well-deserving cause.

For me, the hardest part of the challenge was the training. Whether it's running every day or waking up early for circuit training, it all adds up. In my opinion, Fridays were the hardest, we had to do one early morning run in the cold, a quick lunchtime run, and then a final long after-school run. However, this training teaches you more than just how to run; it teaches you to be resilient and to persevere even when you don't think you can't run any further.

Thanks to the hard work put in during the training, the run itself was a great experience.



We ran for half an hour at a time through the meandering roads of northern England and then passed the tie to another teammate.

# 2022

The dread of a steep hill and the anticipation of getting out of the bus into the dark at **2:00am** was a huge challenge but nonetheless, we persisted and managed to finish the course in just under 26 hours. I am really proud to have been a part of this year's team.

**By Mason Holles**





2023

# Coast 2 Coast



## The Team

Charlotte Anderson	Chris Mafiamba
Zena Asbury	Dylan Patel
Ashwin Bagga	Tia Patel
Charlie Baker	Matthew Sharpe



£0    £2,000    £4,000    £5,673

Place2Be

Text to come

By \*\*\* \*\*\*\*\*

2023





# The staff

A big thank you to the many staff who have been involved in Coast 2 Coast over the years, both back at base during the 16 weeks of training and along the route from St Bees to Robin's Hood Bay:

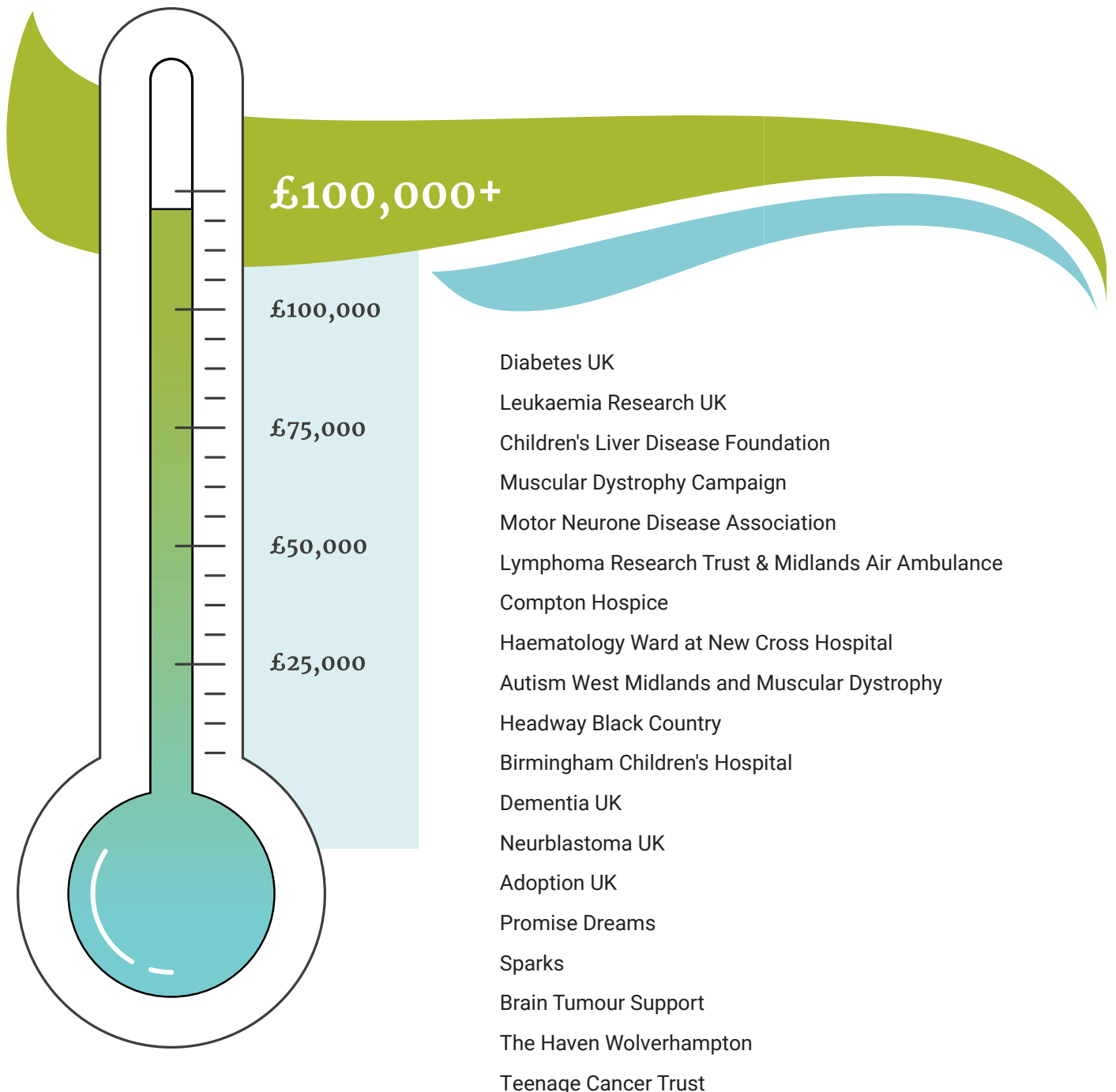
Mr Nic Anderson  
Mrs Diane Birt  
Mr Tom Billingham  
Miss Emma Bowater  
Mr Tim Browning  
Dr Neil Bradley  
Mr Nathan Burden  
Mrs Alison Causebrook (née McAllister)  
Mrs Victoria Clarke  
Mr Francis Cooney  
Mr Ed Cornaby  
Miss Michelle Craig  
Mr Nigel Crust  
Mrs Helen David (née Whitaker)  
Mr Chris Doman  
Mrs Kathy Dyer  
Mr Alex Frazer  
Mr Tony French  
Miss Imogen Gibbons  
Mr James Griffiths  
Mrs Petra Grigat-Bradley  
Mr Ed Hamill  
Mr Paul Hancox  
Mrs Caroline Harris  
Mrs Liz Harris  
Mr Peter Hills  
Dr Simon Hinchliffe

Mrs Heidi Hinchliffe (née Dalzell)  
Mr Huw Humphries  
Mr John Johnson  
Mr Pete Johnstone  
Mr Tom Johnson  
Mr Adam Jones  
Mrs Emma Jones (née Yates)  
Mr Theo King  
Mrs Alison Kingshott  
Miss Harriet Leith  
Mr Henry Lister  
Mrs Fiona Lister  
Mr Ryan Lovatt  
Mr Simon Palmer  
Mrs Pawinder Mahey  
Miss Cheryl Martin  
Mr Matt Martin  
Mr James Millichamp  
Mr Tom Mitchell  
Mr Nick Munson  
Miss Lucy Pearson  
Mr Garath Phillips  
Mrs Becky Powell (née Bradley)  
Dr Bernard Trafford  
Mrs Kate Wainwright (née Ward)  
Miss Danni Wilcox

And to all our wonderful parents who have lent their support cheering, running, cycling and driving the C2C route with us - thank you!

# Charities supported

Over £100,000 raised for many worthwhile causes



The annual C2C Challenge made its rightful return to St Bees after restrictions meant that the 2020 challenge had to take place closer to home at Birches Valley, Cannock Chase. Each of the 12 team members took it in turns to run as far as th



# The staff

Ansaldo Nuclear Ltd  
BJ's News Smethwick  
Brindley Motors  
Cannock Chase Forest Birches Valley  
Grounds Cafe, Birches Valley Forest Centre  
Grounds Cycle Centre, Birches Valley Forest Centre  
H2Go – Severn Trent  
HSBC  
Holiday Inn A1-M Doncaster Hotel  
Holroyd Howe  
Mantex Embroideries Ltd.  
Price Waterhouse Coopers  
Premier Sports Ltd  
Ron Flowers Sports  
St Bees School  
RMW Electrical Services Ltd  
Smugglers and Boathouse Rooms  
Tarmac  
Tesco  
The Blakemore Foundation  
The Shingler Group  
Waitrose Community Matters  
WGS Friends



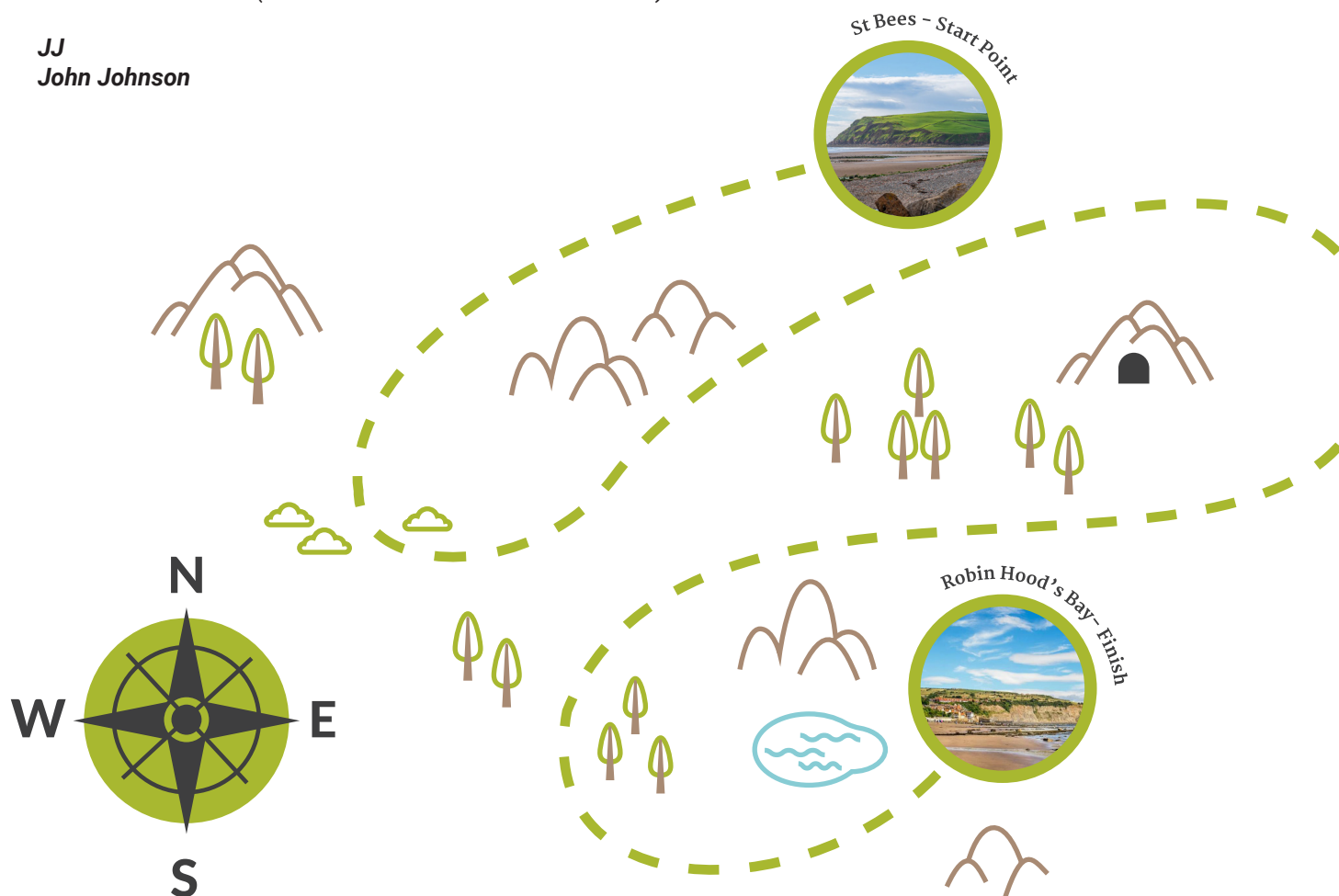
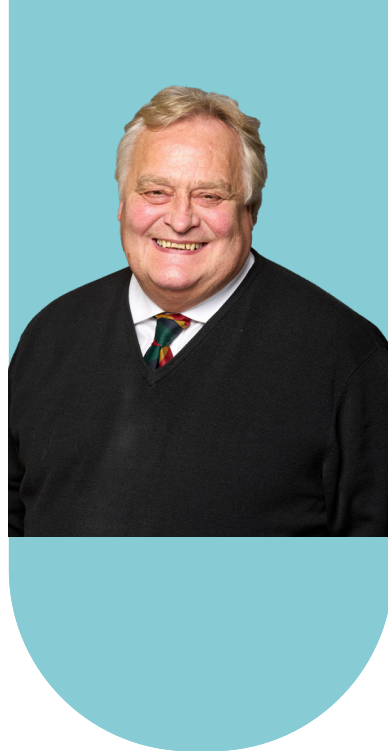
# Final Reflection

Having had the privilege of being part of the 25 runnings of this unique event it has been fascinating to watch it evolve. The initial runs were littered with navigation errors which was understandable as we were trying something no one had done before - following a route using a map only, and at night time that was indeed a challenge (the first C2C team actually ran in excess of 200 miles). Over the years, thanks to the input of many staff, the C2C route is now well established and with the use of modern technology there is little room for error. The use of two minibuses working in tandem allied with the driving support of parents has made the challenge of the C2C relay as safe as possible for our runners.

Training for such a challenge requires a great deal of support from staff at the school and I am sure this is appreciated by our students. The organisation that is required before the event can take place requires many hours and it has always impressed me that we are blessed with so many dedicated staff willing to take on such a challenge. In our current organisers, Tony French and Caroline Harris, the event is in the safest of hands. They appreciate all the hard work that their predecessors have done and understand totally how important this event is to our school. The C2C relay is treated with the utmost respect and is now part of our WGS culture.

Most importantly what has impressed me the most is the sheer determination of our students to complete such a challenge. All 25 teams share the same WGS team ethic, looking after each other when the going gets tough, and not giving in until the job is done. *By my reckoning we have run enough collective miles to reach the Bahamas! (if there was a road to there of course)*

JJ  
John Johnson





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