

**Press Release
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Registered Blind Jim Walks 20km for WheelPower

On Sunday 5 July James Dyett (Jim) will walk 20km around his back garden for WheelPower, the national charity for wheelchair sport. Jim who is registered blind has had his garden measured so he knows to walk exactly 20km he needs to complete an incredible 667 laps! 58 year old Jim, who is from Ashford in Middlesex, is no stranger to WheelPower having taken part in the Asics London 10k for three years running, as well as cycling from London to Brighton with fellow members of the Middlesex Freemasons.

As Jim explains, “On Sunday 5th July I was going to take part in the London 10k to raise funds for WheelPower, based at Stoke Mandeville Stadium. Unfortunately, the event has now been cancelled due to Covid-19 and not wanting WheelPower to miss out on my fundraising, I have decided to organise my own event in my garden. This will be very challenging as not only will I be doing it through the night, I AM SEVERLY REGISTERED BLIND.”

Prior to his sight loss Jim was able to drive, and had worked within the air freight and prison services. However in October 2017 Jim very suddenly lost his sight and now has only 5% vision from his left eye and nothing from his right eye.

Jim explains what happened that weekend, “On Saturday night I was watching TV and I noticed a flash of bright light but didn’t think anything of it at the time. The following day a small circle the size of a 5p piece appeared in my left eye and by Monday I could hardly see at all. I can now only see light and dark shapes.”

Jim spoke to many specialists including those at Moorefields Eye Hospital in the days following this very quick deterioration but despite their best efforts and knowledge, the sight could not be saved. He has had nine operations to try and repair the retina but there is now nothing more they can do.

Since 2000 Jim has undertaken many charitable challenges which have included thirty bike rides, seven 10k runs, he has marshalled the London marathon five times, completed nine Charity walks, a zip line, and a tandem canoe paddle along the Grand Union Canal. Becoming blind has not stopped Jim continuing to support many charities including WheelPower and as he explains, “I am going to carry on doing events for WheelPower for as long as I can and to raise money for the disabled children and adults who benefit from the wonderful sporting opportunities they offer.”

Transforming lives through sport

WheelPower, Stoke Mandeville Stadium, Guttman Road, Stoke Mandeville, Buckinghamshire, HP21 9PP
Tel: 01296 395995 Email: info@wheelpower.org.uk www.wheelpower.org.uk

On Sunday 5 July at 10 pm Jim will set off on the Charity walk around his 25x20ft garden as he completes the first of his 667 laps (20km) listening to the sounds of the birds, and with a constant supply of coffee from his wife Sue he hopes to complete the challenge in approximately 4 hours. Go Jim!

Martin McElhatton, Chief Executive of WheelPower says, “Jim is a fantastic supporter of WheelPower having raised funds for over 3 years. Everyone at the charity wish him all the best on his latest challenge. At WheelPower we are so grateful to have the support of individuals like Jim and his friends within Middlesex Freemasons who continue to amaze us with their long term commitment to our charity and help us to continue to provide opportunities for disabled children and adults to access sport and physical activity throughout the UK.”

“Unfortunately like so many charities across the UK, WheelPower has been hugely impacted by the cancellation of fundraising events due to COVID-19 and we expect our fundraising to reduce by 50% because of the virus. Having people like Jim continue to support us during this time is vital and means so much more and we can’t thank him enough.”

You can support Jim’s Challenge and donate to WheelPower by visiting his Just Giving Page: <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/james-dyett1>

“PLEASE dig deep and support WheelPower during these difficult and demanding times, they are a wonderful charity and do great things for disabled children and adults. They are currently raising funds to keep disabled people active in their own homes during these unprecedented times; which so important for mental health and well-being. Thanking you all in anticipation.” Jim.

***ENDS**

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Royal Patron: HRH The Prince of Wales KG, KT, GCB, OM, AK, QSO, PC, ADC
Patrons: Ade Adepitan MBE, David Barnett, Annabelle Christie, Baroness Grey-Thompson DBE, Paddy Hopkirk MBE, Roger Jelfoate CBE DL, The Countess of Westmorland
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Chairman: Rob Wilson Chief Executive: Martin McElhatton
Charity registration number: 265498 The British Wheelchair Sports Foundation Limited (WheelPower) registered office: as above Company registration number: 01059490

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Notes to Editor:

About WheelPower

WheelPower have been providing opportunities for people with physical impairments to take part in sport for nearly 70 years. Based in Stoke Mandeville, the home of the Paralympic movement, WheelPower is at the heart of wheelchair sport.

From first-timers to Paralympic medallists, we support and promote participation at all levels. We have seen how playing sport can enrich lives, offering tremendous physical and psychological benefits, whatever your age or ability.

During the current crisis WheelPower has continued to offer new opportunities for disabled people to get active and stay active through a range of events and resources that include our popular 'Exercise at Home' fitness films. WheelPower also provides equipment that enables disabled people to get active and support for a range of wheelchair sports associations.

Website: www.wheelpower.org.uk

Social media:

WheelPower can be found on all channels so please do tag us into your posts using the following: [@wheelchairsport](#) (Facebook) [@wheelpower](#) (twitter) [@wheelpower_official](#) (Instagram)

Please use the following hashtags when posting about Jim's Challenge [#The667Challenge](#) [#JimsChallenge](#) [#WalkforWheelPower](#)

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