



TRIP NOTES

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# BELIEVE ACHIEVE INSPIRE

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SOUTH DOWNS AT NIGHT  
UK

Sat 26 Jun - Sun 27 Jun 2021





## In aid of The Openwork Foundation

26 Jun - 27 Jun 2021



### 2 DAYS | UK | CHALLENGING

Push yourself to the limit on this unique night time trek through the South Downs National Park. Following part of the famous South Downs Way, you'll battle fatigue, the elements and the demanding terrain of one of southern England's newest national parks. You'll negotiate the rolling chalk hills and cliff tops that lie between Firle Beacon and Beachy Head.

- Trek the South Downs National Park overnight
- Negotiate rolling chalk hills and cliff tops
- A marathon distance trek.....at night
- Watch the sunrise over the white cliffs of the Seven Sisters
- Enjoy a celebration breakfast after your challenge

Walking until morning, you'll cover a marathon distance of 42km, including the famous white cliffs of the Seven Sisters, before ending your gruelling hike on top of England's highest chalk cliffs. In 2016 the National Park was granted International Dark Sky Reserve status, making it one of the best places in the country to view the night sky. As dawn breaks, your hard work will be rewarded with breath-taking views across the South Downs.

## YOUR CHALLENGE DAY BY DAY

### DAY 1 Sat 26 Jun

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#### **Saturday evening: Arrival and preparation**

The adventure begins this evening at approximately 8pm in Brighton where you will meet your challenge leaders and crew for a pre-trek safety briefing, before beginning the trek.

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### DAY 2 Sun 27 Jun

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#### **Through the Night**

As darkness falls, we set off in a south-easterly direction across the ancient Long Burgh towards the village of Alfriston. Easing in with a long downhill section, the route is lit by torchlight and stars. For many, trekking through the night will be one of the most challenging aspects of the journey as our senses become more attuned to the enveloping darkness.

The terrain becomes more challenging and fatigue sets in as we follow the course of the Cuckmere River towards the coast. Draw on hidden reserves of energy to battle through the tiredness.

Crossing the rolling chalk hills of the Seven Sisters we then enter the most spectacular, and most challenging part of the walk, past the Belle Tout Lighthouse and on to our journey's end at the top of Beachy Head.

A new day dawns on the spectacular vista of chalky white hills and sea views. All being well, we will arrive at the finishing line in time for sunrise and a well-earned breakfast!

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#### **NB**

The itinerary is there as a guide and may change due to unusual weather patterns, the strength of the group, or other unforeseen circumstances. We will do our very best to keep to the set itinerary, however we cannot be held responsible for any last minute changes that may occur. In all such circumstances though, your challenge leader will have the final say.

## HOW TO FUND YOUR CHALLENGE

### MINIMUM SPONSORSHIP

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Registration fee of £20.00 when you book

Raise a minimum of £220.00 for your charity.

## WHAT'S INCLUDED

### Before you go

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- Members only benefits and discounts at a wide range of clothing and equipment suppliers including Outdoorhire, Cotswold Outdoor, Runners Needs, Snow + Rock, Water to Go, The Altitude Centre, Sporttape and Nomad & MASTA.
- 16 and 20 week trek/bike training schedule
- Fitness training notes
- Sponsorship forms (online and hard copy)
- A-Z of fundraising ideas
- Public liability insurance
- Risk assessment and emergency management planning
- Support materials (itinerary, kit list, fact file, Q&As, health notes, travel tips, responsible travel policy and guidance)
- Fundraising advice

### On your challenge

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- All challenge management before, during and post event
- Hot breakfast at the end of your challenge
- Celebratory drink at the finish line
- Full back-up support including first-aid qualified staff and first-aid supplies
- Drinks and snacks available throughout the night, including a hot chocolate stand and luminous face paint station

## WHAT'S NOT INCLUDED

### Before you go

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- Travel to and from the challenge start/finish point
- Clothing and equipment listed on your Kit List

### On your challenge

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- Personal spending money
- Any other specific items listed as not included in your Trip Notes

## THE DETAILS

### Fundraising deadlines

You will need to send your sponsorship money to the charity as you raise it. At least 80% of the minimum sponsorship required must be sent to the charity 7 weeks before departure (by 08/05/2021), and the remaining 20% within 4 weeks of completing the challenge (by 25/07/2021). If you have raised the necessary funds, the charity will then pay the balance of your challenge costs. The charity benefits by keeping the remaining sponsorship money and every pound over and above that you raise.

### Typical group size

The typical group size is 20 - 50 participants

## Terrain

Despite its location in the UK, the difficulty of this trek should not be underestimated as it includes one long day of hiking, with tough ascents and descents. The route is predominantly on good paths, but it's the variation of boggy footpaths or loose limestone gravel along the cliffs that make this challenge even more demanding. You should also consider that all terrain becomes a little bit more difficult when walking at night as your field of vision is significantly reduced.

## Emergencies

Your leading team are trained to deal with emergency situations in remote areas and will be carrying a mobile phone and radios in case the emergency services need to be contacted. The event is not run as a race and you will never be encouraged to walk at a pace 'beyond your ability'. There will always be a wide variety in people's walking abilities which will be carefully managed by the leader team. This team will always keep the group together for maximum safety on each peak and set a sensible pace for all to achieve this challenge within 8hrs. If we find that you are unable to trek at all, then we will arrange for you to be escorted back down to the start/finish.

## Safety advice for the South Downs at Night Challenge

- The terrain on the challenge is often rocky and in wet conditions can be extremely slippery. Please make sure that your walking boots have good grip. Trainers are not appropriate as they lack grip.
- Trekking at night is by its nature a hazardous activity. A powerful, good quality headtorch is absolutely vital.
- Due to extra risks posed by trekking at night we always use a higher ratio of Mountain leaders to maximise safety. It is very important that you always listen to your leaders at all points and obey any decisions they make.
- The weather at night can be very different to during the day. Please make sure you carry an additional warm layer, waterproof jacket and trousers and a hat and gloves.
- 10-12 hours is a long time to be out on a trek, especially overnight. Ensure that you eat lots throughout the night and keep yourself hydrated by drinking lots of fluids.
- Trekking along cliff tops in the dark requires an extra level of care. Whilst the footpath is set away from the cliff tops you should be aware of where the path is going at all times.

## Toilets

There will be toilets available at the registration point. There will be no toilet facilities during the challenge and such facilities will be limited to the great outdoors!

## Food & Drink

You should ensure that you have eaten dinner before arriving at registration in the evening.

Snacks and water will be available at checkpoints throughout the night.

Because of the remote nature of the trek you should carry any snacks that you require on the challenge.

At the finish line there will be a hot breakfast to help you celebrate.

The drinking of alcohol the night before the challenge is strongly discouraged for your own health and safety during this tough challenge.

### Accommodation

No accommodation is provided for this challenge. We would like to encourage all participants whenever possible to book a few extra nights in the local area to fully enjoy their challenge and to put money back into the local communities. However, there are lots of excellent accommodation options to suit all budgets in Eastbourne. For a full list of accommodation choices in Eastbourne please check out the Visit Eastbourne website.

### Getting There

We will confirm the event location at no later than 1 month prior to the start of the challenge. The registration will be in the town of Brighton which is easily accessible by both car and train.

We will send across all driving details, plus the address of the registration point, at no later than 1 month prior to departure.

The challenge will finish in Eastbourne.

### Challenge Timings

Your challenge begins in the late evening (usually around 9pm) with registration near Brighton. Here you will get to meet your leaders and listen to the all-important safety briefing.

Having trekked through the night we will finish our trek as the sunrises over Beachy Head before we then reach Eastbourne for a celebration breakfast before departing.

You will be walking for approximately 10-12 hours, which makes your trek a very long night. You can expect to arrive at the finish at around 8.00am. Delays can happen, and the return time will all depend on the speed of your group, so please do try and book flexible return arrangements. At the finish there will be a hot breakfast available before you depart.

### Responsible Tourism

At Charity Challenge we are committed to sustainable and responsible tourism. On this challenge in particular, we always liaise with the rangers of the South Downs National Trail to make sure that we minimise our impact on the local environment. Our leaders care passionately for the environment and will be keen to talk to you about how you can do your bit to conserve the local area and enhance your experience. We believe that acting responsibly should add to your enjoyment of the challenge so we won't lecture you about not dropping litter. Instead we'd like to encourage you to support the 'South Downs National Trail who maintain the excellent footpaths we will be walking on. The South Downs National Trail have an excellent website that provides information on their fantastic work and allows you to donate to them directly. Their website can be viewed [here](#). We would also like to encourage all our participants to spend a little extra time in the local area. Why not consider booking an extra night in a local B&B, and go out for a meal in one of the excellent local pubs after the challenge? Not only will you be able to celebrate your achievements but you will also be putting more money back into the local area. For extra information, please visit our [Responsible Tourism](#) pages, where you will be able to view a list of the other projects that we currently support.

### Why book with Charity Challenge

- Everything included from the moment you arrive. Buffet dinner, snacks and hot drinks throughout the night and then a glass of champagne and a cooked breakfast to celebrate at the end.
- The very best Mountain Leaders, who are fully qualified, highly experienced, knowledgeable and fun. They will do everything to help you complete the challenge and have a great time doing it.
- Ethical consideration. For every participant we donate money to a local conservation charity in order to protect the beautiful route that we use. We also do our best to use local suppliers, which helps us to put money back into the local area.
- The highest quality night-time charity trekking experience on the market!

### Climate

As you know, the weather in the UK can be highly unpredictable and at times erratic, so being prepared is the key! As this challenge takes place at night the temperature can often reach freezing point. Please check the weather forecasts up to ensure that you bring clothing suitable for warm sunny walking weather and also sudden wind and downpours should they occur.

### Leadership

We employ experienced and fully qualified mountain expedition leaders to accompany and lead you. The mountain leaders are first aid qualified and have extensive experience in leading expeditions throughout Britain and overseas. They will be ultimately responsible for the running of the itinerary and the safety of your group. They will be carrying full safety equipment and mountain first aid kits with them at all times.

### Group Size

Our minimum group size for this challenge is 10 and the maximum is 100. There will be one challenge walking leader per approximately 10-15 participants and you may find you will naturally walk in smaller groups according to your own



pace.

### Insurance

We don't offer insurance for our UK trips, as any medical emergencies would naturally be covered through the NHS. If you wish, you could look into your own policy that covers cancellation for travel within the UK.

### Money

During the trek there are not an opportunities to spend any money. At the end of the trek Eastbourne does have several nice cafes, pubs and restaurants that you may wish to relax in before travelling home. We would advise you should need no more than £20.00, excluding your joining and returning home travel costs.

### Training

The South Downs at Night Challenge is a long, sustained, overnight event covering varied terrain with steep ascents and descents when following the cliff tops. Therefore it requires a good level of fitness. The ideal training for this challenge is, naturally, walking in the outdoors. However, if you do not have the luxury of living near the great outdoors, then the stairs at home (or an office block) are a great place to start. Try building in a walk to work if possible, or perhaps at lunch. Most training should be part of an ongoing lifestyle, but if this is not the case then you should begin training 2-4 months prior to the challenge and gradually build up as suggested. Remember to use the walking boots that you will be wearing on the challenge in order to get them worn in, and take the daysack that you will be using during the challenge.

There is no substitute for walking in the outdoors, over similar terrain that you will face on the challenge, so try if possible to get out on a weekend and train in an appropriate area. It can be a great way to discover nearby places that you never knew existed! If it is possible for you to practice walking at night with your headtorch then this is also useful. You should progress to training with your boots on from week 4 at the latest, but preferably from week 1. The more you exercise before the challenge, the more you will get out of it. Also see your Charity Challenge Fitness Training notes.

### Clothing and Equipment

Equipment of good quality and durability could make the difference between a fantastic challenge experience and an uncomfortable one. For this challenge, a good quality headtorch with spare batteries is vital. A headtorch is much better than a handheld torch as it allows you to keep your hands free. If you do not wish to buy an expensive headtorch just for this challenge then very good quality ones can be hired for the weekend from our partners at Outdoor Hire. Waterproof and well-worn in boots will be indispensable. The terrain is uneven and can be very rough, so it is vital that you use a strong pair of canvas or leather boots with good ankle support for this challenge, coupled with a pair of good quality walking socks. Sports trainers are not suitable. As this a nighttime challenge the temperatures will be significantly colder. Enough warm layers are vital as are hats and gloves. If possible, try to bring two pairs of gloves and two hats as these can very often get wet. The benefits of a comfortable day sack cannot be underestimated - so make sure that you train with this. Other essentials are high quality gore-tex waterproof and windproof jackets and

trousers, as well as technical/wicking t-shirts rather than cotton shirts. We would like to emphasize that jeans should not be worn on this challenge. A full kit list for this challenge can be found [here](#). Once you book you will have access to kit discounts with our partners The Outdoor Shop, Outdoor Hire and Cotswold Outdoor.

### The importance of a good head torch.

A head torch is a vital piece of kit for this challenge, along with enough spare batteries. A hand-held torch is not really suitable as it does not allow you to keep your hands free. Your head torch should also be bright enough to light your way and for you to view the terrain a good distance in front of you. We would recommend a head torch with a beam strong enough to reach 40m in front of you (approximately 80 Lumens). If you do not wish to buy an expensive head torch then very good quality head torches can be hired for the weekend from our partners at Outdoor Hire (click [here](#) for details)

### Level of Difficulty

The South Downs at Night challenge is graded as tough. This is the perfect challenge for participants who are of an adventurous spirit and an open mind, who have taken part in other trekking challenges and now wish to test themselves in a slightly more challenging environment and with the added challenge of trekking at night. You can tell your supporters that on your South Downs at Night Challenge you will be:

- Trekking for around 10-12 hours, starting in the evening and finishing the following morning.
- Covering overing a marathon distance (42km) of demanding terrain across the South Downs.
- Testing yourself with the steep ascents and descents along the stunning cliff tops of the Seven Sisters. A section made all the tougher as it arrives in the last few miles of your trek.
- Tackling the unique challenge of trekking at night. A test for both your physical and mental resolve.

# CH>RITY CH>LLENGE

## Any more questions?

Contact us:

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