WE ARE MACMILLAN. CANCER SUPPORT

TRIP NOTES

# BELIEVE ACHIEVE INSPIRE

## TEAM PENNI - LONDON TO BRUGES BELGIUM

Fri 29 Apr - Mon 02 May 2022

## In aid of Macmillan Cancer Support

*29 Apr - 02 May 2022*

MACMILLAN CANCER SUPPORT

**4 DAYS | BELGIUM & UK | CHALLENGING**

This classic London to Bruges cycle ride takes you from the UK's capital to one of Belgium's most beautiful cities over three days of cycling.

The 286km route starts at Sheen Common and after a few photos the route heads from the hustle and bustle of the city out into the beautiful Kent countryside.

On day 2 after a short ride from the Cathedral City of Canterbury to Dover you will cross the channel to France where the ride continues through the countryside into Belgium. Here we mostly follow cycle paths to our overnight stop in the coastal town of De Panne before the final day's ride into the beautiful city of Bruges where you will finish in the main square.

A suitable challenge for those who are new to the sport, as well as the experienced cyclist, this is a bike ride not to be missed whatever your cycling ability.

- Cycle 286kms over one long weekend
- Depart from England's bustling capital, London
- Ride through beautiful French and Belgium countryside
- Celebrate the completion of your challenge in Bruges
- Return in comfort on the Eurostar

## YOUR CHALLENGE DAY BY DAY

**DAY 1** *Fri 29 Apr*

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**London to Canterbury (approx. 76 miles/122km)**

After all the preparation, the time has finally come to get pedaling! The journey kicks off in Sheen Common, South London, where you'll meet the rest of the group, the challenge leader and support team. An introductory briefing will include vital safety advice, and then you're off! After a short cycle through the outskirts of London, the route passes along country roads then through Rochester before reaching Canterbury, your stop for the night. (L,D)

Accommodation: Hotel

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**DAY 2** *Sat 30 Apr*

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**Canterbury to De Panne (approx. 69 miles/111km)**

After an early breakfast you'll continue on to Dover where you take the ferry to Calais. From here the route heads slightly inland before continuing east towards Belgium. After crossing the border we mainly follow cycle paths and canals to the coastal town of De Panne.

Having arrived in De Panne during the late afternoon, the group will dine at a local restaurant then retire to your hotel. (B,L,D)

Accommodation: Hotel

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**DAY 3** *Sun 01 May*

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**De Panne to Bruges (approx. 33miles/53km)**

Refreshed after a good night's sleep, it's time to push on for the final ride to Bruges.
The route mainly follows cycle paths which are typical of the area and make Belgium so popular for cycling. As we ride into Bruges the cycle paths turn into cobbled streets before we finish in the main square, one of the highlights of this iconic city.

There's time for a quick celebratory drink and the obligatory victory snaps, before heading off to your hotel for the final celebratory dinner together. (B,L,D)

Accommodation: Hotel

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**DAY 4** *Mon 02 May*

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**Depart Bruges**

Now the hard work is over, take the morning to explore Bruges at your leisure or simply lie in and relax after last night's celebrations. Later it's time to make your own way to the station, from where you'll catch the Eurostar back to St Pancras International. [Please see Q&As for information on bike transportation back to the UK.] (B)

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**NB**

B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, D=Dinner

The itinerary is there as a guide and may change for a variety of reasons. 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, your expedition leader will have the final say.

## HOW TO FUND YOUR CHALLENGE

This page provides you details of the costs of your challenge.
The costs below are per person.

### SELF FUNDER

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*Pay a registration fee of £250.00 when you book*
*Then a balance of £720.00*
*(10 weeks before your challenge)*
*Raise as much as you can for your charity.*

### MINIMUM SPONSORSHIP

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*Registration fee of £250.00 when you book*
*Raise a minimum of £1470.00 for your charity.*

## WHAT'S INCLUDED

**Before you go**

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- Access to UK based training weekends (optional and at additional expense)
- 12.5% off Cotswold Outdoor, Snow + Rock, and Runners Need
- Sponsorship forms
- Support materials (itinerary, kit list, visa information, travel tips, responsible travel policy and guidance)
- Fitness training notes
- Public liability insurance
- Risk assessment and emergency management planning
- Access to your own password protected account including support materials and training schedules
- Fundraising advice
- Warm up exercise routines
- 16 and 20 week trek/bike training schedule

**On your challenge**

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- Three meals a day (unless otherwise stated in the itinerary)
- UK-based 24-hour emergency support line
- A donation to a community project in one of the countries in which we operate
- A Charity Challenge T-Shirt
- Full back-up support including first-aid qualified staff and first-aid supplies
- Accommodation during the challenge (usually in twin share)
- Internal transfers (unless otherwise stated in the itinerary)
- Drinking water on challenge days
- An English speaking first aid trained challenge leader and full local support team
- Charity Challenge buff

## WHAT'S NOT INCLUDED

**Before you go**

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- Visa (if required)
- Any covid tests required for entry to any countries or places of interest on your challenge itinerary
- Vaccinations (please check Trip Notes for requirements)

**On your challenge**

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- Bike and helmet
- Tips

## THE DETAILS

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| 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 9 weeks before departure (by 25/02/2022), and the remaining 20% within 4 weeks of completing the challenge (by 30/05/2022). 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 21 - 60 participants |
| Optional extras | Extensions at end of trip*<br>Single room supplements*<br>Travel insurance<br>(*subject to availability) |
| Travel insurance | Your safety when travelling with Charity Challenge is our main concern, which is why it is a booking condition that you have a suitable travel insurance policy, which covers you for the adventurous nature of your challenge, the activities you are undertaking, and the altitudes. We have chosen to partner with specialist travel insurance providers Campbell Irvine, who offer cover for an extensive number of adventurous activities. Cover is available directly from Campbell Irvine for most European residents and includes cover for emergency medical and repatriation and for your cancellation or curtailment of the challenge. Full details including costs may be found at http://www.campbellirvinedirect.com/charitychallenge. |

### Climate

As you know, the weather in the UK can be highly unpredictable and at times erratic (and it is the same in the regions of France and Belgium that we will cycle through), so being prepared is the key! We run UK challenges between April and October, and although the summer months of June-August should be, in general, warmer, sunnier and more stable in terms of the weather conditions, we all know that this isn't always the case. Please check the weather forecasts in the week prior to the challenge to ensure that you bring clothing suitable for warm sunny cycling weather and also sudden wind and downpours should they occur.

### Passport

You will require a passport to enter France and Belgium with at least 6 months validity left on it.

### Getting there

The group will convene on Sheen Common where you will meet the rest of the group. We will confirm the exact location of your starting point at no later than 1 month prior to the start of the challenge. Please ensure that you have breakfast beforehand, because breakfast is not provided on the first day.

### Challenge Timings

Your challenge will begin at appox. 0800hrs in the morning, where you will start the adventure with a 76 mile cycle to Canterbury. After the first long day of cycling, you will rest up in our hand-picked hotel. On day two we will depart early and reach the ferry. Riders will eat lunch on the ferry and after disembarking you will cycle to De Panne. On your final day, the group will complete the shorter final ride into Bruges.

### Responsible Tourism

At Charity Challenge we are committed to sustainable and responsible tourism, and work closely with bodies such as the International Porter Protection Group and Climate Care to ensure that our challenges benefit the local environments and communities in which they take place. We ensure that all rubbish is disposed of responsibly, and following local guidelines on cultural and environmental protection and respect, we aim to limit our impact on the natural environment. In addition to taking these practical steps to ensure that our challenges are sustainable, we also make a contribution each year to a number of local community projects, so as to give something back directly to the communities that we visit. Since 2000 we have donated almost £200,000 to such projects, supporting a range of initiatives, including schooling for children in Africa, shelter for street children in Brazil, and Orang-utan conservation in Indonesia. We recommend that any gifts brought over for children are given to the UK challenge leader and distributed where needed by them and our local Ground Agent. If you wish to do more, you should consider buying drinks, postcards and souvenirs from the local vendors. For many, it is their sole source of income. For more information, please visit our Responsible Tourism pages, where you will be able to view a list of the projects that we currently support.

### Terrain

This cycle challenge will put you up against a whole host of different terrain across the UK, France and Belgium. From great lengths of flat ground, to hours spent on hilly land, be prepared for all types of terrain. For this reason, it is important to train properly. Please be aware that the distances, lunch stops and finish points may change.

**Day 1** – London to Canterbury: Lunch stop at around 40 to 50 miles
**Day 2** – Canterbury to Dover & Calais to De Panne: A relaxed ride to the ferry followed by a nice afternoon ride on quiet French roads and into Belgium
**Day 3** – De Panne to Bruges: More beautiful Belgium countryside is the order of the day

### Level of Difficulty

The London to Bruges bike ride is graded as challenging. This is the perfect challenge for participants who haven't experienced cycling abroad and who haven't experienced the feeling of consecutive days riding before. It is a strenuous challenge which will allow people to push themselves out of their comfort zone. You can tell your supporters that on your London to Bruges bike ride you will be:

Cycling for around 8 hours each day
Covering roughly 178 miles/ 286km over 3 days of cycling
Cycling into Bruges on quiet roads before finishing at the main city square

### Leadership

There will be a first aid qualified challenge leader who speaks English, plus two fully qualified cycling guides for every 10 participants. There will also be a qualified medic in the leadership team. The leader & the guides will ultimately be responsible for the running of the itinerary and the safety of your group, so please listen to their instructions.

### Group Size

Our group size will be 20+ people.

### Insurance

Your safety when travelling with Charity Challenges is our main concern which is why it is a booking condition that you have a suitable travel insurance policy that will cover you for the adventurous nature of your challenge. We have chosen to partner with specialist travel insurance providers Campbell Irvine, who offer cover for an extensive number of adventurous activities. Cover is available directly from Campbell Irvine for most European residents and includes cover for emergency medical and repatriation and for your cancellation or curtailment of the challenge. Full details including costs may be found by clicking here.

For more travel insurance questions, please refer to our main FAQs page or for any specific queries, please contact

us at bookings@charitychallenge.com.

### Money

**Cash:** We recommend approximately £125 in Euros as a sufficient amount for your London to Bruges bike ride, and you could bring this all in cash, or in a mixture of cash and a bankcard (check with your own bank about relevant charges). You will need a debit or credit card in case of emergency.

**ATMs:** There will be ATMs on each nightly stop, but you are unlikely to pass them during the day.

**Tips:** We recommend approximately £10-£15pp for tipping, which will be given to the challenge leader at the end of the challenge and split between all of the leaders and drivers fairly.

### Training

This challenge is suitable for all levels, as it is guided. If you have never cycled before, this ride is still achievable with the correct ride preparation. We advise that you start at least 5 months ahead of the ride with some short distances at weekends and whenever you can during the week. 5-10miles is not a great distance and will help your bottom and legs get used to it all. By 2 months prior to departure, you should be able to take on longer rides, up to 40-50miles in a day. Here is an 18 week suggested training guide to help you build up to 60miles a day.

If you live in a flat area it is well worth getting out and finding some hills, and whilst this may hurt, the more of these you do the easier you will find the ride and the rest of your training. Within a month of the ride we recommend that you have done at least one full day ride. This will be the best indication of how well you are doing and mentally prepare you for the 3 days to Bruges. If you cannot maintain a steady average speed of 8 miles per hour you are unlikely to be able to complete each day's cycling. You may therefore be asked to get in the van. If possible, try to train with a group as it will make it much easier to keep motivated.

### Packing your Bike

Bikes can be packed into a bike box if you wish, but please notify us beforehand so that we can ensure there is enough room for the box in our vehicles. You will be expected to have the necessary tools with you to construct and deconstruct your bike (turn handle bars, remove pedals, remove front wheel). Once you have completed the challenge we will transport your bikes back to London by van so that you can collect them at a pre-arranged location.

### Type of Bike

Typically a good road bike is recommended for the challenge; however a hybrid would be suitable, but possibly make your life more difficult. A mountain bike may struggle to keep up with the same pace as some cyclists on a road bike because it will be heavy and the tyres are wider. We would recommend that the bike is serviced the week before your challenge to ensure that the brake and gear cables along with brake pads haven't been to worn out during your pre-challenge training.

### Clothing and Equipment

Choosing the right kit could make a huge difference to your enjoyment of the challenge. You will need to bring your own helmet so that the fit will be perfect. You will not be allowed to ride unless you wear a helmet. We recommend you bring your own gloves too. They are an essential piece of kit that will relieve strain and abrasions in the event of a fall. You must also bring your own padded cycle shorts, and stiff-soled sports shoes are recommended if you are not wearing SPD shoes. You will need to bring your own puncture repair kit, inner tubes and pump with you in case you get a puncture during the challenge. Please refer to the kit list for more details here.

Your main luggage will go in the support vehicle that is transported to the hotel each night and you will only need snacks, phone, drinks etc. in your jersey pockets or backpack for the day.

### Why book with Charity Challenge?

- Everything included from the moment you arrive. Unlike other operators we include everything from hotel accommodation, your evening meals, breakfast, lunch and plenty of snacks and water stops whilst on the bike ride.
- The very best cycling tour 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.
- The final night's accommodation is situated in the heart of Bruges

### Accommodation

All accommodation will be in good quality tourist-class hotels of 2-3 star rating. Rooms will be used on a twin share basis & all rooms will have their own bathroom. If you are travelling with a friend or partner who you wish to share with, please indicate this where appropriate during the registration process or if you email bookings@charitychallenge.com well in advance of the challenge.

### Food & Drink

The hotels in which you will be staying will have a continental breakfast buffet (please note that breakfast is not included on departure in London). At lunch times you will stop and have a light yet energy-filled picnic. Dinner will be either at the hotel or at a local restaurant. Water and energy snacks will be provided throughout the days of cycling. Please let Charity Challenge know prior to departure if you have any specific dietary requirements or allergies.

### Toilets

There will be bathroom facilities both at the start and end of each day of the challenge. However during the challenge such facilities will be limited to lunch breaks as well as service stations and public restrooms en-route.

### Safety

Safety advice for the London to Bruges Cycle Challenge

Charity Challenge considers the safety of all of our participants and staff to be a top priority, and as such we have set up Challenge Safe, one of the most advanced and thorough safety management systems in the industry. Challenge Safe formalises our ethos when it comes to safety, and brings together the procedures and risk management strategies that we use to audit all aspects of our challenges, from vehicles to accommodation to the challenge activity itself. Your welfare is absolutely paramount!

Here are a couple of important points that you should be aware of:

The terrain on the challenge is often undulating, especially in the UK. Once you reach France the terrain is more gradual with a few steady climbs.
The weather during the challenge can be unpredictable so we would recommend checking the weather forecast beforehand and pack the appropriate clothes for the challenge.
You will be expected to adhere to the Highway Code during the challenge and respecting the traffic laws. Once you arrive into France you will be required to cycle on the right hand side of the road, and it is a legal requirement that you have a bell on your bike.
8 hours of cycling is long time to spend on a bicycle, so please ensure that you fuel your body correctly at the water stops and during breakfast and lunch. There will be plenty of water stops to fill up your water bottles during the challenge.

### Emergencies

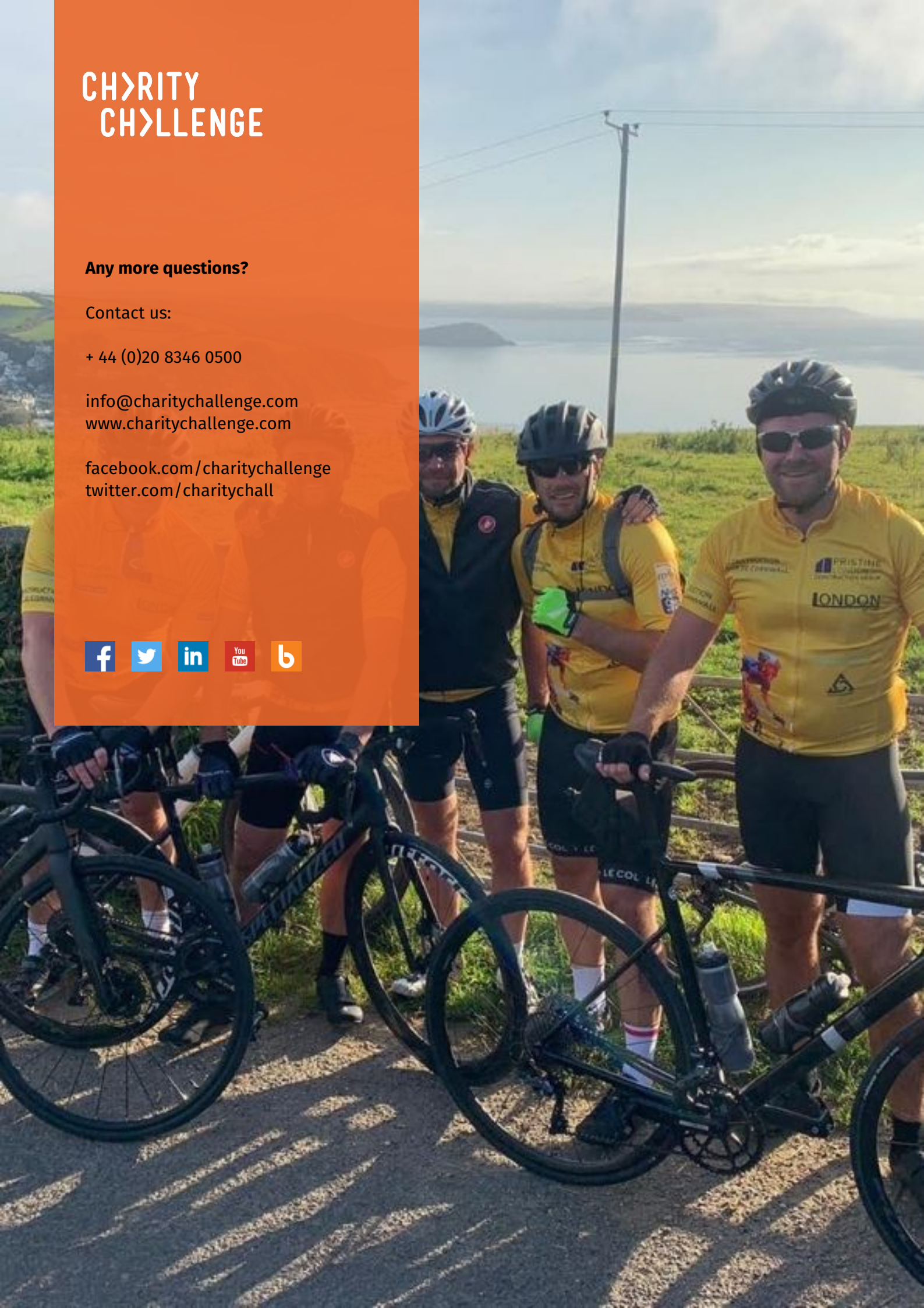
The back up support vehicle will never be far away from participants and can be used in the event of an emergency. Contact will be maintained between challenge leader, guides and support team throughout the challenge. Mobile phones have good general coverage and all guides carry one. You will always be given an emergency card with your leader's number on it and those of the guides.

CHARITY CHALLENGE

**Any more questions?**

Contact us:

+ 44 (0)20 8346 0500

info@charitychallenge.com
www.charitychallenge.com

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