

# the Yorkshire three peaks challenge

*Cat Handforth fundraised through wind, rain, and bog*

**T**he Yorkshire three peaks walk is a substantial physical challenge.

The circular route incorporates Pen y Ghent (691m), Wharfedale (728m) and Ingleborough (723m). The 26 mile walk, with a total ascent of over 5,000 feet, must be completed within twelve hours.

The National Students' Committee (NSC), in their wisdom, decided that this would be the perfect group challenge! On 8 August, we descended on a village deep in the Yorkshire Dales with three aims: conquer the peaks, have fun, and raise money. The funds would go towards subsidising our annual national students' conference.

## in God's safe hands

The original accommodation plans fell through days before the event, so Foxwood Farm was a huge answer to prayer. Its spacious lounge, drying room, hot showers and comfortable beds met all our needs.

The 15 walkers, divided into three teams, included students and CMF office staff from Oxford, Manchester, Warwick,

London, Hull and Leeds. We found out it was not a holiday when we were rudely awoken at 5am. Revived by a hearty breakfast and lots of caffeine, we were given rather simple instructions: not to lose one another or get lost by ourselves!

From 6am the teams set off at intervals. It was such a relief, for many of us city dwellers, to be in the middle of nowhere, enjoying fresh air and birds in full song. We were not surprised to see other 'three-peakers' setting out for the day; one man with a cigarette and beer can in hand. We wondered how his lung function and neurological control held out through the day!

## climbing the peaks

The first peak (Pen y Ghent) was only a few miles from the start,

but we had to endure the steep and blustery ascent to the summit. Once there, we were rewarded by stunning panoramic views; we could even see the twelve miles we needed to walk to reach the next peak. Unfortunately, the sky became dark and cloudy by 9am, while a fine drizzle swirled around us. The rain got steadily heavier, as we headed up the valley towards the second peak, turning the ground into an energy-sapping bog. A few





## if we can raise £5,000...

Our small group managed to raise over £5,000. It is exciting to think how much we could raise with more people! Charlotte Hattersley (CMF Northern Student Team Leader) capably masterminded this operation.

The team was also blessed with a fantastic array of useful skills, including: porridge making, umbrella holding, taxi driving, human signposting, encouraging and the inevitable first aiding!



was a battle, as we were at the mercy of howling wind and pelting rain. We came down the other side with trepidation: slippery rocks, weary legs and impatience do not make a safe combination!

I thanked God for the café in the middle of nowhere, where we took a welcome break.

The shelter, tea and chocolate psyched us up to conquer the final peak. Ingleborough was the steepest of the three and we found it tough work!

After getting up and down that peak, one final challenge remained - a ford separated us from our front door. What started the day as a gentle trickle had become a small lake! Somehow we crossed over, and all 15 walkers were back safely by 6pm. Our barbeque plans were thwarted by the elements, but we were just glad to be warm and dry inside!

This weekend proved that fundraising together can be lots of fun. The NSC encourages local CMF groups to organise creative events at your own medical school. From cake sales to organising revision sessions, and even sky dives - the possibilities are endless and the cause is worthy! Have a look at [www.cmf.org.uk/fellowship/students](http://www.cmf.org.uk/fellowship/students) for more ideas.

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of us got stuck and needed help getting out!

By late morning we reached Ribbleshead. The second peak loomed large above the viaduct where CMF marshals were stationed. We refuelled in the shelter of their car boots and umbrellas; we also applied plasters to blistered feet and joked about the rain not stopping.

Wharfedale had a series of big steps on a ridge; made more difficult by soaking wet clothes, waterlogged boots and icy cold legs! Even staying on the ridge