

DbS & DbUK Press Release:

Could you climb the highest mountains in Scotland, England and Wales and cycle the 483 mile route in-between?

Could you do this if you were also Deafblind?

Bob Nolan, current Chair of Deafblind Scotland (DbS), has decided that his first project as Deafblind UK's (DbUK) new Chair, is to take on a challenge that we believe has never been done before by a deafblind person. A challenge which supports raising awareness of these sister charities and spans 3 countries.



Guided by his wife Louise, who is also Deaf, Bob will climb Ben Nevis on 18th June, Scafell Pike on the 22nd and finish his challenge climbing Snowdon on the 25th whilst good friends Jerry and Fred will guide Bob as front riders on his tandem on the two cycling legs to complete his epic journey.

So why is Bob taking on such a daunting challenge?

“Sadly the incidence of deafblindness is growing in the UK with over 400,000 people now struggling with the everyday challenges of normal life. I want to raise awareness and let people understand that whilst dual sensory loss is so isolating for so many, it doesn’t have to be. With the right support deafblind people can lead full and active lives and still fulfil their dreams. I hope that by completing this challenge, I can inspire others to come forward and with the help and support of DBUK and DbS achieve their own ambitions whatever they may be.”

Bob was born deaf with a progressive sight loss which started to impact on his life in his childhood years and now has less than 3% left. This has never held Bob back and as well as recently retiring from a successful and fulfilling career with Shell, he has chaired Deafblind Scotland for over 17 years, backpacked solo around the world, crossed England on foot, run numerous marathons, cycled 1000’s of miles for charity, loves open water sea swimming and even started his first deaf pop band at the age of 16. Bob’s cup half full approach to life and extra-ordinary belief in making the most of what he has, inspires us all and like Helen Keller once said, he believes “Life is either a great adventure, or nothing.”

We asked Bob what he was looking forward to most about the challenge and what he was dreading.

“I am looking forward to climbing Ben Nevis as that will mean the training is over. The thing I am least looking forward to, is cycling the hills, not the uphill climbs as you might expect, but the fast descents. I struggle to anticipate corners and changes in light anyway, but at speeds in excess of 40mph, I have to put all my trust in my guides and as the world rushes by, it’s terrifying!”

Bob is taking part in the challenge as a lead up to Deafblind Awareness Week which starts on Monday 25th June 2018. There are a number of activities planned as Deafblind UK celebrates 90 years of helping the deafblind community.

If you would like to wish Bob well, please do feel free to place a message on our facebook or twitter pages, or maybe you would like to join Bob on part of this adventure? He would welcome anyone to join him on the 3 climbs or cycling en-route, or even just to wave him on his way as he cycles the 100 miles each day. You can also make a

donation to further support deafblind people by visiting Bob's fundraising page on:

Of all the things we know about Bob, he will make this fun from beginning to end.



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Notes to Editors:

- Deafblind UK is a national charity supporting people with sight and hearing loss, enabling them to lead the lives they want.

- Deafblind Scotland is a national charity whose aim is a society in which deafblind people have the permanent support and recognition necessary to be equal citizens.
- The work both charities do raises the awareness of deafblindness, continually highlights the everyday challenges faced by deafblind people and makes a real difference to and for our citizens and their communities across Scotland, England, Wales, and Northern Ireland.
- What we do is vital to improve the lives of those who are dual sensory impaired.
- There are over 400,000 deafblind people in the UK with different degrees of sight loss and hearing loss, together (Centre for Disability, 2010, 'A Sense of Urgency' report commissioned by Sense, p2). Deafblind UK provides the practical daily-living support that so many deafblind people need, like providing home befrienders, organising social groups, and providing help and advice.
- Combined sight and hearing loss is a growing issue in the UK, and predictions suggest that by 2030 there could be as many as 600,000 people in the UK struggling with it. This could be the fastest growing disability in the UK, yet many of us don't realise that we're affected by it or that there is support available.
- Deafblind Awareness week will be launched at 10am on Monday 25th June.
- A series of events will take place across England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland, including information stands in hospitals, information stands at eye clinics, attending the London Visually Impaired Forum, holding awareness sessions with Health & Social Care students, holding an exercise day at an elderly day centre, teaching Brownies and Guides groups Deafblind Manual, hosting a sports day with a local Visually Impaired group, info stand at Doctors Surgery, info stand with Fire Service, and a History Open Day.
- Deafblind UK (registered national charity no: 802976) originates from the Deafblind Helpers' League which was launched in 1928 by deafblind people and carers.
- Deafblind Scotland (Scottish Charity No. SC031167, Company Reg. No. 216974)



- Find out more at: www.deafblind.org.uk
- Find out more at: www.dbscotland.org.uk

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