NEURO MATTERS

SPRING/SUMMER 2022

NHS **The Walton Centre NHS Foundation Trust**

Excellence in Neuroscience



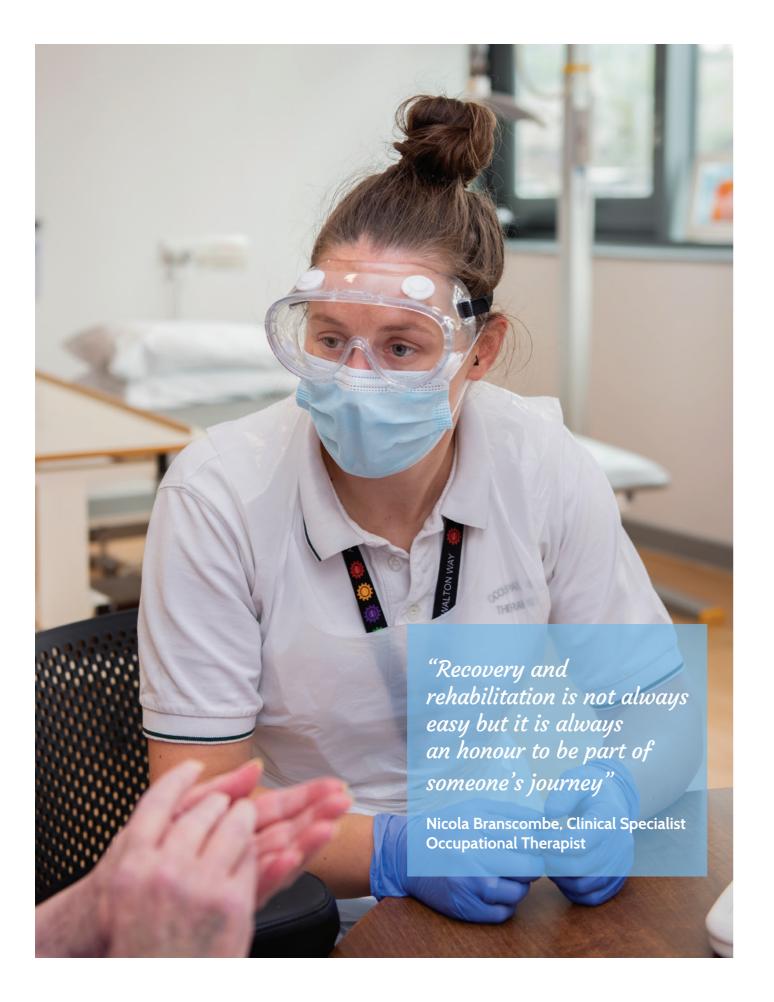


Giving back -Generosity making a difference

Virtual reality A UK-first for The Walton Centre

Learning on the job Three trainee

healthcare staff share their stories



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contact: wcft.communications@nhs.net

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Welcome to the spring 2022 issue of Neuromatters, the magazine of The Walton Centre NHS Foundation Trust.

In this issue we look at the amazing work done by our Neuropsychiatry Team. The team offers a unique service, combining neurological and psychiatric elements to support patients with life-changing injuries and conditions. They see patients across almost every area of the hospital, and throughout every step of their journey.

We also report on the roll-out of our MR-guided Focused Ultrasound which is a game-changing treatment for people with Essential Tremor. The Walton Centre is the first Trust outside London to offer this treatment, and it's already making a huge difference to patients.

The Walton Centre Charity raises money to support patients and staff, funding new and exciting technology, research, and improved facilities. We hear from Madeleine Fletcher, Head of Fundraising, about why she loves working for the Charity and how the incredible generosity of our supporters makes such a difference.

There's also the latest news from around The Walton Centre including the UK's first and only Neuro VR simulator, and how three of our healthcare staff are learning their trade.

I hope you enjoy this issue.

Jan RossChief ExecutiveThe Walton Centre NHS Foundation Trust

FIRST WALTON CENTRE PATIENTS RECEIVE GROUNDBREAKING TREATMENT FOR ESSENTIAL TREMOR



The Walton Centre has recently rolled out a new service using cutting-edge treatment for people living with Essential Tremor – a neurological disorder that causes an uncontrollable shake or trembling in a part of the body.

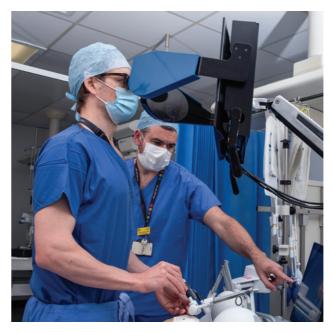
Offering this groundbreaking new treatment will make the Trust the first centre in the north of England to do so, and just the second in the UK. The non-invasive treatment called Trans-cranial MR-guided Focused Ultrasound, or Focused Ultrasound for short uses an augmented Intraoperative MRI, to target the key areas of the brain causing the tremors.

Medical Director Dr Andrew Nicolson said: "We consider this treatment a game-changer for our patients with Essential Tremor. Those eligible for the

treatment will see the symptoms on one side of their body essentially disappear. It's not very often that we are able to see this effect in movement disorders, without a significant amount of surgical and medical intervention. It's been an incredible team effort and this moment marks the start of an invaluable service we can offer our patients."

Mr Jibril Farah, Consultant Neurosurgeon and one of the lead clinicians for this project, said: "Those patient in the north of England waiting for this treatment can now come here to Liverpool, rather than have to wait to be treated in London. I'm so proud of the team and how we've pulled together to bring this treatment to patients. It's also an exciting prospect for research, which could see the treatment tested for other conditions such as Parkinson's disease."

UK first for virtual reality technology



Virtual reality has led to new and exciting discoveries across many areas of life, including medicine. Now, The Walton Centre is leading the way in the use of VR in neurosurgery. Thanks to the support of The Walton Centre Charity (see page xx), the Trust recently installed the UK's first and only Neuro VR simulator.

A revolutionary piece of equipment, it will enable experienced surgeons at The Walton Centre to develop the very latest techniques, taking their skills even further, and allow trainee surgeons to practice safely, yet in a realistic environment.

Mr Nicholas Carleton-Bland, Consultant Neurosurgeon and lead in medical education, (above with specialist registrar Dr Matthew Stovell), said the simulator will be game-changing.

"The installation of the simulator at the UK's only specialist Trust for neuroscience will allow us to become a national hub for simulation based training in neurosurgery, benefitting patients across the country and changing the future of neurosurgery.

"I can't thank the supporters of The Walton Centre Charity enough for their incredible generosity. It really will make a huge difference."

Spinal surgery team receives Centre of Excellence award.

The Walton Centre's fully endoscopic spinal surgery service has received Centre of Excellence status. The RIWOspine award, comes after a legacy to The Walton Centre Charity funded the equipment in 2020. The Walton Centre is one of only a handful of trusts to achieve this status in the country. Consultant Spinal Surgeon Mr Narendra Rath said: "I am delighted and so proud of the team. The procedure causes minimal tissue damage and can improve patient rehabilitation."

Elections are upcoming for Governors of The Walton Centre NHS Foundation Trust.

We have vacancies in the following areas: Merseyside (five), Cheshire (one), North Wales (one), Rest of England and Wales (two), Medical Staff (one). More information is available at:

thewaltoncentre.nhs.uk/ governor-elections

Anyone interested can speak to Katharine Dowson, Trust Corporate Secretary on 21 June about the role of a Governor, how you can stand for election and any questions you might have, visit:

thewaltoncentre.nhs.uk/governor

A decade of TONiC.

Ten years ago, the TONiC study started at The Walton Centre. A national study examining the factors that influence quality of life in patients with neurological conditions, it is one of the largest studies on quality of life in neurological conditions in the UK. Professor Carolyn Young, Consultant Neurologist and study lead, said "We hope TONiC has a significant and positive impact on the lives of all patients that suffer from multiple sclerosis and motor neurone disease, regardless of symptoms, stage of illness or age."

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NEW NAMES AT THE TOP







The Walton Centre has appointed a new Chairman and two new Non-Executive Directors.

Max Steinberg CBE (above centre) took up the position of Chairman on 1 April. This follows the resignation of Janet Rosser due to ill health. Janet sadly died in February 2022.

Max has extensive experience across business, innovation and industry, most recently eight years as Chief Executive of Liverpool Vision. Born and bred in Liverpool, Max was awarded the OBE in 1997 for services to Housing and

Regeneration on Merseyside and the CBE for services to Business and the Community in 2013.

In August 2015, Max was appointed Chairman of the Roy Castle Lung Cancer Foundation, and in December 2018 Chair of the Board of The ACC Liverpool Group.

Max said he was delighted to be taking up the role at The Walton

"The Walton Centre is one of the jewels in the crown of healthcare providers, not just in Liverpool

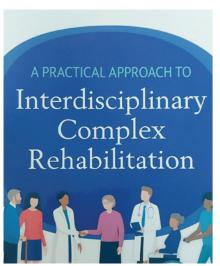
but in the UK. As the son of a Liverpool GP, the opportunity to work for this fantastic institution was something I was very interested in."

Late last year, the Trust appointed Professor Paul May (far left) and Ray Walker (near left) as Non-Executive Directors.

Professor May recently retired from The Walton Centre where he spent 40 years as Consultant Neurosurgeon. After being appointed as Merseyside's first Paediatric Neurosurgeon in 1991, he established the paediatric neurosurgical service in Alder Hey Children's Hospital.

Ray Walker, who is a Registered Nurse, has over 40 years' experience working in a diverse number of roles including the NHS and higher education, and was a student nurse on Cairns Ward at The Walton Centre at the start of his career.

READING ON REHABILITATION



Leading clinicians in rehabilitation have come together to write a new book on the interdisciplinary team (IDT) approach to complex physical rehabilitation.

'A Practical Approach to Interdisciplinary Complex Rehabilitation' is a comprehensive, practical, evidence-based guide to complex rehabilitation from an IDT perspective.

The book has been developed by Drs Cara Pelser, Helen Banks and Ganesh Bavikatte from The Walton Centre NHS Foundation Trust and Cheshire and Merseyside Rehabilitation Network (CMRN).

The fifteen chapters are written by a wide range of medical, nursing, AHP and psychology colleagues from the CMRN who are highly experienced across a range of disciplines and settings, from early acute rehabilitation to community rehabilitation.

SHARING KNOWLEDGE **ACROSS THE WORLD**



The Brain Health Knowledge Exchange Programme, hosted by clinicians at The Walton Centre and the University of Liverpool, has been awarded nearly £20,000 funding by the World Health Organisation and University of Liverpool's HLS Policy Support Fund to expand the range and reach of regular knowledge sessions.

The programme, born out of necessity during the pandemic, brings researchers, policy makers and clinicians together from across the globe to share learning and tackle COVID-19 together.

The programme has conducted a pilot which saw 136 delegates from 48 countries join together to collaborate on the different facets of caring for people with COVID-19. The latest event held in March 2022 received over 400 delegates from 80 countries - but there are plans to increase this in the near future.

Dr Greta Wood and Dr Benedict Michael lead the programme. They said: "It's been an incredible journey for clinicians all over the world in coming together to study and ultimately beat COVID-19 and its unfortunate impact on the population. The pilot workshop was a huge success and clinicians have taken valuable knowledge and resources from it to tackle the pandemic in their own countries.

"We're planning to grow this platform into a living collaboration and use it to look at other health issues too. By combining expertise like this on a global level, we believe we will be able to make a huge impact, and we're so pleased the WHO have recognised this with their ongoing support."

Keep up to date with the programme's latest news via @GlobalBrainHeal on Twitter.

This year The Walton Centre turns 30 years old!

To help celebrate, patients, visitors and past staff members have been telling is their Walton Centre stories...

"I've been a patient since 2007, I've had six lots of surgery since then, my Specialist Nurse Cath has been at my side for all those years, and she has her own spot in my heart."

"I was sent to The Walton Centre in May 1997 for two bleeds to the brain. Then in June 2019 I suffered another two bleeds and Mr Andrew Brodbelt was the main

"I went to your excellent Pain Management Programme in 2003 and you introduced me to Tai Chi (and pacing) I have practised ever since and now I teach it"

MIND AND BODY





Over the last three years, the Neuropsychiatric Team at The Walton Centre has grown into a comprehensive service for both inpatients and outpatients seven days a week. The service uses a unique model, which combines neurological and psychiatric elements to provide a holistic approach to supporting patients with sometimes life-changing injuries and conditions. The team estimates that 20-50% of Walton Centre patients have neuropsychiatric comorbidities, making this service indispensable when providing all-round care. The

service includes a high level of liaising with inpatients, outpatient clinics and ongoing support for long term care, making the model at The Walton Centre unique in spanning assessment, treatment and monitoring.

Lead Advanced Nurse Practitioner Jon Smith said: "We have built a strong and supportive team here in Neuropsychiatry, it feels like a little family! It's helpful to have each other to rely on and ask for advice and support to make sure we get it right for each one of our patients.

"Given the busy, fast paced nature of the service, we need to adapt to changes quickly. We have clinics, ward rounds, multidiscliplinary team meetings, patient assessments and reviews, often happening at the same time. This requires us to communicate well, be flexible and willing to share knowledge and experience with colleagues. Our team are often able to follow a patient journey from critical care, during inpatient treatment and rehabilitation then, if required, as an outpatient. This gives patients continuity and helps ensure we develop a therapeutic

relationship which provides consistency of care, and supports both patients and their loved ones."

The team works around the clock to support patients across multiple disciplines. Last year the service saw 2,000 patients, providing ongoing neuropsychiatric treatment and support.

Neuropsychiatry Specialist Nurse Lindsay Cleary said: "We cover neurosurgical, neurology and rehabilitation wards. Patients often have neurological diagnosis, traumatic injuries, spinal injuries, complex pain and rehabilitation needs. We provide assessment, treatment and monitoring of patients who experience psychiatric symptoms, secondary to their neurological illness or injury.

"Patients who experience long term conditions, life-changing injuries and impairments are often neuropsychiatric service, go to at increased risk of experiencing symptoms of mental ill health. In Neuropsychiatry we offer a responsive and dedicated service to contribute to patient's holistic

needs. We provide specialist risk assessment and essential risk management plans."

The team plans to increase the support for patients and are also hoping to support the additional development of health and wellbeing services for staff.

For more information on the thewaltoncentre.nhs.uk

LEARNING ON THE





"I never knew what I really wanted to do, but now I feel I've found the answer"

Andrew, Health and social care apprentice

Working in healthcare offers huge rewards but the experience and qualifications required can seem daunting to some.

However, there are more routes to these professions than people might care apprenticeship scheme at The think. Julie McEnerney, Practice Educator at The Walton Centre, said: "If you have good communication skills, and a desire to help patients, there could be a route into nursing or healthcare for you. We have people who have changed career later in life, or those who are looking the teams for voluntary work on for a practical way into their dream job – it's all about how you care, and told about the new apprenticeship you can't teach that."

While the main route into nursing is through a degree course at university, The Walton Centre also offers several other options for

careers as a nurse and Healthcare Assistant (HCA).

Megan Pape (above right) and Andrew Pennington (above left) are both on the health and social Walton Centre.

Megan, 22, said: "After I finished school, I went into hairdressing, but I always wanted to work in a hospital with patients. I got a job in admin at The Walton Centre but pestered the wards for ages! When I was scheme I cried – it was like a dream come true.

"I've been working on Cairns Ward for six months now and I feel very blessed to be able to work with the patients. Knowing that you might their bad days better makes me want to do my very best every single

Both Megan and Andrew are on a 15-month programme, spending one day a week at college and 30 hours on the ward. At the end of the course, they will qualify for a permanent position as an HCA.

Andrew, 28, said his role on Chavasse Ward gives him a lot of job satisfaction. "I've been a porter for ten years and I really enjoyed the patient interaction.

"They're long days, but to come away feeling you're having a positive impact on someone's day is an honour. My approach is to give as much kindness as you can.



"I never knew what I really wanted to do, but now I feel I'm on the right path."

Jade Fitzsimmons, 29, (right), is on a trainee nursing associate programme. "After a decade as a nursery nurse, I wanted a change but to remain in the care profession. I did the care support worker development programme at The Walton Centre before becoming an HCA and I am now training to be a Nursing Associate.

"I do four six-month rotations around wards, every day is different. The hustle and bustle of the wards and working with all the different professions is great, but most importantly I love working with the patients – they're why I do this job."

Julie McEnerney said anyone interested in a career in healthcare should contact the Trust. "There are so many options and routes in, if you're passionate about caring for people, that's the important



The routes into healthcare

Further education

Apprenticeship

Employability programme

Nurse bank/agency

A TEAM EFFORT



For nearly ten years, Laurie Sephton has been living with Parkinson's Disease. Here he describes his journey...

When I received the diagnosis in 2013, I was devastated, but in truth I knew it was coming given the tremors in my left hand. However, nothing prepares you for a Parkinson's disease diagnosis nor having to relay the terrible news to your wife or parents. Having your loved ones there supporting you throughout is incredibly important but it's something you wish you never have to tell them. What was also crucial was the immediate support I received from the clinicians at The Walton Centre.

Whilst the medication prescribed is very effective in the beginning, acceptance for me was the hardest part. In 2019 I joined a local Parkinson's boxing club which, along with the on-going

support from the medical team at The Walton Centre, meant I felt able to accept my prognosis and gave me the confidence to re-engage with society. By 2021 I was amazed to find a local walking football team, which had other players with movement disorders. I never thought I'd be well enough to play the game I love again. Now I had my family, The Walton Centre, Rock Steady Boxing and Northern Lights FC all in my corner.

Eventually the medication was starting to lose its effectiveness in stopping my symptoms (which were no longer limited to just my left arm) and was even causing dyskinesia, a common side effect. We'd talked about advanced therapies with my consultant since before the pandemic and by 2021 we agreed DBS (Deep Brain Stimulation) was the most suitable option given my profile. From that moment the timeline to having

"I'm looking forward to doing the 'normal things') used to take for granted; like spending time with my four beautiful girls, going the match or even having a pint with my mates' Laurie, patient

DBS in October 2021 went very quickly. DBS is essentially having two neurostimulators fitted in my brain and a powerpack in my chest to send impulses that correct the neural activity within. When they first tested the implants at the end of November, my symptoms all but disappeared at the press of a button. It was like they rebooted me! It was an incredible validation of the brilliance of the team. Since then, we are building back up slowly to that 'Eureka moment', making sure my body and brain gets used to the stimulators on a much lower level.

With DBS, I feel much more positive about the future. Whilst I'm sadly too old to play for Liverpool, I'm looking forward to doing the 'normal things' I used to take for granted; like spending time with my four beautiful girls, going the match or even having a pint with my mates. I always say I was unlucky to get Parkinson's at 38 but blessed to have such a wonderful family, circle of friends, boxing club, football community and not least The Walton Centre close at hand.

Q&A MADELEINE FLETCHER, **HEAD OF FUNDRAISING**



What does your role involve?

My main responsibility is to make sure The Walton Centre Charity raises enough money to support charitable projects in the hospital which benefit patients, their families and staff. I manage the Fundraising Team, who liaise with and support patients who want to raise money for the Charity as a thank you for the care they have received, and who have often benefited from the projects we have funded – which is lovely!

I work with staff talking about new projects and ideas they have for charitable funds and how we can best support them. This might involve advice on how they can apply for existing funds, or if

the Charity can help raise funds through a new appeal. A huge part of my role is to engage with external supporters – fundraisers, donors, companies and other organisations - all of whom are incredibly generous and supportive of the work we do.

How do you and your team support staff and patients?

The Walton Centre Charity raises money to support The Walton Centre in providing the best treatment and care possible for its patients and their families, including funding for new and innovative technology, research and development and improved facilities.

While patient projects are our main focus, we also support staff through improved facilities, training opportunities, and health and wellbeing initiatives. During the pandemic it was particularly rewarding to be able to facilitate the public's generous support for staff.

What's it like working at The **Walton Centre?**

I love it. I came from a bigger charity where you don't see the direct impact on the people you are helping as much. As we're a smaller charity, you're so close to what's happening – you get to meet the patients and see directly where the money you have helped raise goes, and the difference it's making. It's so rewarding to see that first-hand.

What are some of the challenges you face?

There are a huge amount of good causes for people to support and it's a difficult economy at the moment, so we very much appreciate the situation a lot of our donors and fundraisers are in, and yet they still support us – we can't thank them enough.

What's the most satisfying part of your job at the hospital?

Hearing the feedback from families and supporters who have had experiences at the hospital and knowing that what they want to do to say thank you is raise money for the hospital, and then seeing the direct benefit. Our patients talk so kindly about staff; it's lovely to hear and to be able to do something to help both them and our staff. They're all amazing.



WALK FOR WALTON



The Walton Centre Charity launched a new fundraising event this May - Walk for Walton!

Our amazing supporters walked 100,000 steps across the month of May, an average of 3,000 steps a day. Accessible to our older and younger supporters alike, together Suzanne Hatchard, Accounts with their canine friends, and wherever you are in the UK, it was the perfect way to embrace spring and fundraise for The Walton Centre at the same time.

Money raised will go towards the Home from Home relatives' accommodation at The Walton Centre where relatives can stay after a patient has been admitted for urgent treatment.

Staff at the hospital also joined in - taking part in the challenge itself, and spurring supporters along with for the Home from Home service. their daily step counts.

Lisa Salter, Chief Nurse at The

Walton Centre, said: "Some of our nursing staff do 10,000 steps a day, and our porters 25,000. It's been lovely to see them posting messages of support on social media to our amazing supporters, and sharing their step counts."

Clerk at The Walton Centre, is a staff member taking part. "I see the incredible benefit the support of the Charity brings to patients across the whole Walton Centre. saw Walk for Walton as a great way to get involved, and also increase my daily steps - a win-win! I've been wearing my t-shirt around the hospital and it's started a lot of conversations about the Charity, which is even better!"

Lisa continued: "It means so much to see the amount of money raised The benefit of families staying in a safe environment, close to their loves ones while they are



"The benefit of families staying in a safe environment, close to their loves ones while they are sometimes in life-threatening or changing condition at the hospital, cannot be underestimated." Lisa Salter, Chief Nurse

sometimes in life-threatening or changing condition at the hospital, cannot be underestimated.

"I can't thank everyone enough for their support."

Next year we hope to run both a virtual Walk for Walton and an in-person event, so keep an eye on our website for news!

READY TO RACE?



Whether you're a complete beginner, or an experienced runner, there's an event out there for you to take part in and raise money for The Walton Centre Charity at the same time.

For those interested in a 26.2 mile challenge, there's the Virtual London Marathon on Sunday 2 October. Last year, staff and supporters from The Walton Centre raised over £14,000 for The Walton Centre Charity. The Walton Centre Charity once again has places in the virtual event, where supporters can run or walk any route, anywhere within 24 hours.

If you'd rather run with the masses, the Chester Marathon and Metric Marathon, also on Sunday 2 October are both open for entries, and you

can sign up to raise money for The Walton Centre Charity through your own entry.

For something a bit different, you could try the Tough Mudder on 10/11 September in Malpas, Cheshire. There are three different distances packed with obstacles from the sublime to the ridiculous.

If you're not guite ready for such serious running, fear not, there's always the infamous Santa Dash!

The Liverpool Santa Dash on Sunday 4 December is the biggest and longest established Santa Run in the UK. The 5k fun run starts in front of the famous Liver Building with hundreds of Santas ready to take on the course!

Contact our Fundraising Team to find out more:

0151 556 3466

hello@thewaltoncentrecharity.org www.thewaltoncentrecharity.org

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Thanks to our incredibly generous supporters we smashed the £130,000 mark for our Neuro VR appeal, and it was fantastic to see the Neuro VR installed at The Walton Centre earlier this year.

The 10th anniversary Jan Fairclough Ball, held in November 2021, raised an amazing £72,000 for the appeal which got it off to a great start, and through a combination of the Christmas appeal, including a £20,000 grant from The Hemby Trust, announced at the Ball, and individual donations, we reached our target.

Madeleine Fletcher, Head of Fundraising, said: "Thank you to everyone who made a donation – you really are changing the future of neurosurgery."



How to support The **Walton Centre** Charity

Sign up to our lottery

Fundraise for US

on how to make the a fundraising page and

Make a donation

a one-off or regular Centre Charity via our

difference to patients treated at The Walton Centre now and in the

FEELING ADVENTUROUS?



Ever wanted to do something adventurous whilst helping others? Now is your chance! Enjoy the thrill of abseiling off one of the UK's most amazing buildings, as you descend 150ft free-hang from above the great West Door of the iconic Liverpool Cathedral, at 3pm on Saturday 30 July.

Cost: £35 non-refundable deposit and £165 minimum sponsorship. There are **only 10 places available** - so be quick!

Contact the Fundraising Team to book your place: 0151 556 3466 hello@thewaltoncentrecharity.org

