

Folkestone Downs Challenge

Saturday 2nd September 2023



Your support
helps us be there
for the next
family that
needs us

Pre-event information



Thank you for entering the **Folkestone Downs Challenge** on **Saturday 2 September 2023**. We are pleased to welcome you to the second year of this exciting event, and hope you have an enjoyable day putting your best foot forward for Pilgrims Hospices and the patients we care for. The essential information is listed below to ensure that you have a safe and enjoyable hike and raise money for a worthwhile cause. Participant safety is our highest priority and we hope you will understand any measures that are in place to ensure the safety of everyone involved.

Important numbers for event day

Participant hotline (event day only): 07710 854029

Medical emergencies: 07535 631568

Advance event enquiries: 01227 812609 or fundraising@pilgrimshospices.org

Recommended apps

To ensure you have a safe and enjoyable hike, it is recommended that you download the following free apps to your smartphone:



Pilgrims Hospices
Events

The **Pilgrims Hospices Event App** (available for **iOS** and **Android** devices). It's free to download from the **App Store** and **Google Play** and allows you to view a detailed map of your chosen route, including your current location, to keep you on track all the way to the finish. **Please note:** You do not need a MapMyTracks account, or to sign into the Pilgrims Event App in order to see your location on route maps. **However, you do need to give the Pilgrims Event App permission to use your location within your phone settings.**

 what3words

The **What3words** app (**iOS** and **Android**) is an easy way to identify precise locations. Every 3m square has been given a unique combination of three words: a what3words address. Essential for telling our event medics or recovery vehicles your location if you need their assistance.



Did you know?

The Folkestone Downs Challenge has a total elevation gain of 460m, with the highest point being Tolsford Hill, 181 metres above sea level.

Getting ready



Training for the Folkestone Downs Challenge

It is recommended that you are able to walk at least 75% of the route distance comfortably beforehand. This will ensure you have an enjoyable experience at the Folkestone Downs Challenge without feeling overwhelmed. A comprehensive training plan is available on the Pilgrims Hospices website [here](#).

Essential items to bring

You'll find a full list of recommended equipment and clothing in our **Folkestone Downs Challenge Kit List**, but you should carry some **emergency money, form of ID, charged mobile phone** and a **basic first aid kit containing blister plasters**.

We recommend that you bring with you a full **water bottle** (or two) and any **preferred snacks**. A full list of the catering available at each rest stop can be found in the 'Refreshments' section later in this document.

When arriving at all event venues and rest stops, please be vigilant. Do not leave your belongings unattended. Pilgrims Hospices, Folkestone Harbour Arm and other rest stops are not liable for the theft of your belongings. This also applies if you stop at any location on the route.

Participant packs

A participant pack has been posted to every participant who registered before 13th August 2023. Included within the pack is a **unique participant lanyard, technical t-shirt** (in requested size), **sponsorship form, arrival information** and any neck scarves if they were purchased with entry. This means that you can arrive at the start venue ready to go.

If you signed up after 13th August, you will be able to collect your participant lanyard and T-shirt at the event.

Please note that your participant lanyard contains a space to write any important medical information, the participant hotline and medical number, as well as maps of the route.

Weather

The event will take place regardless of weather conditions, so please prepare by bringing sunscreen or waterproof clothing, as appropriate. The event will only be cancelled in extreme adverse weather conditions and the weather forecast will be monitored in the lead up to the event.

No dogs at the Folkestone Downs Challenge

While dogs make for great training companions, they are not permitted to accompany participants on the Folkestone Downs Challenge. We cannot cater for them along the route and it can be difficult to manage on the trail amongst other hikers, narrow sections, and where the route joins the road.



Safety advice



All participants in the Folkestone Downs Challenge agree to following all safety advice issued by the organisers.

- Participants must follow the instructions provided by the Folkestone Downs Challenge organisers and marshals at all times.
- All participants must obey the Country Code and Highway Codes. It's important to remember other road users while navigating sections of the Folkestone Downs Challenge that cross or follow roads. With marshals positioned at various locations, any participants seen not adhering to the Highway Code may be banned from future events.
- Walk considerately. Do let cars pass. **Walk in single file towards oncoming traffic while on road sections** of the Folkestone Downs Challenge without pavement. Please don't drop litter.
- Organisers are not responsible for the general health of participants. If you have any concerns about health or fitness to complete this challenge please consult your GP before taking part.
- All participants should fill in the medical details section on the reverse of their lanyard if they have any health conditions event medics should be aware of in an emergency.
- All participants **MUST** be over the age of 16 to participate in the Folkestone Downs Challenge.
- **Parental consent forms** must be submitted for young participants who are over 16 years and they must be accompanied by a participating adult. They can be downloaded from our website and sent to fundraising@pilgrimshospices.org no later than 1st September 2023.
- Please bring your own personal first aid kit that includes blister plasters. You should also bring a spare pair of walking socks in case your first pair become wet; wet socks lead to blisters!
- If you present with any symptoms of COVID-19 while at the event, you should leave the event immediately.
- All participants should carry a form of ID on their person at all times during the event, in case needed in a medical emergency.
- You must carry a **charged mobile phone** at all times and provide the number to the organisers in advance of the event. This is in addition to the emergency contact number that you have already provided us with when registering.
- **All participants must understand that this challenge is not a race or trial of speed.** It is a personal challenge for each individual and no record of times will be kept on the day. Should you become tired, please stop and take a rest before continuing with the event.
- Should you wish to track your times, we encourage you to do so with the free Pilgrims Hospices Event App or other fitness app on mobile phones, or regular hikers may have Garmin or other GPX devices.
- Take extra care on sections of the Folkestone Downs Challenge that cross or follow the road. The roads **will not** be closed to other traffic.



Travelling to the event

We highly recommend that you are dropped off close to the start and picked up by family or friends who can take you home after such a tiring challenge.

Public transport

There are good public transport links to get to and/or from the event. You may find the following transport information useful.

Folkestone Central Train Station: Serviced by trains running twice per hour from the directions of Ashford and Dover; the station is a 20-minute walk from the start venue at Folkestone Harbour Arm.

Folkestone Bus Station: Buses run into the centre of Folkestone from surrounding towns. You can plan your journey online [here](#). The bus station is a 15-minute walk from the start venue at Folkestone Harbour Arm.

Start venue

The event starts and finishes at the following location:

Folkestone Harbour Arm, Harbour Approach Road, Folkestone, Kent, CT20 1QH

Drop-off zone

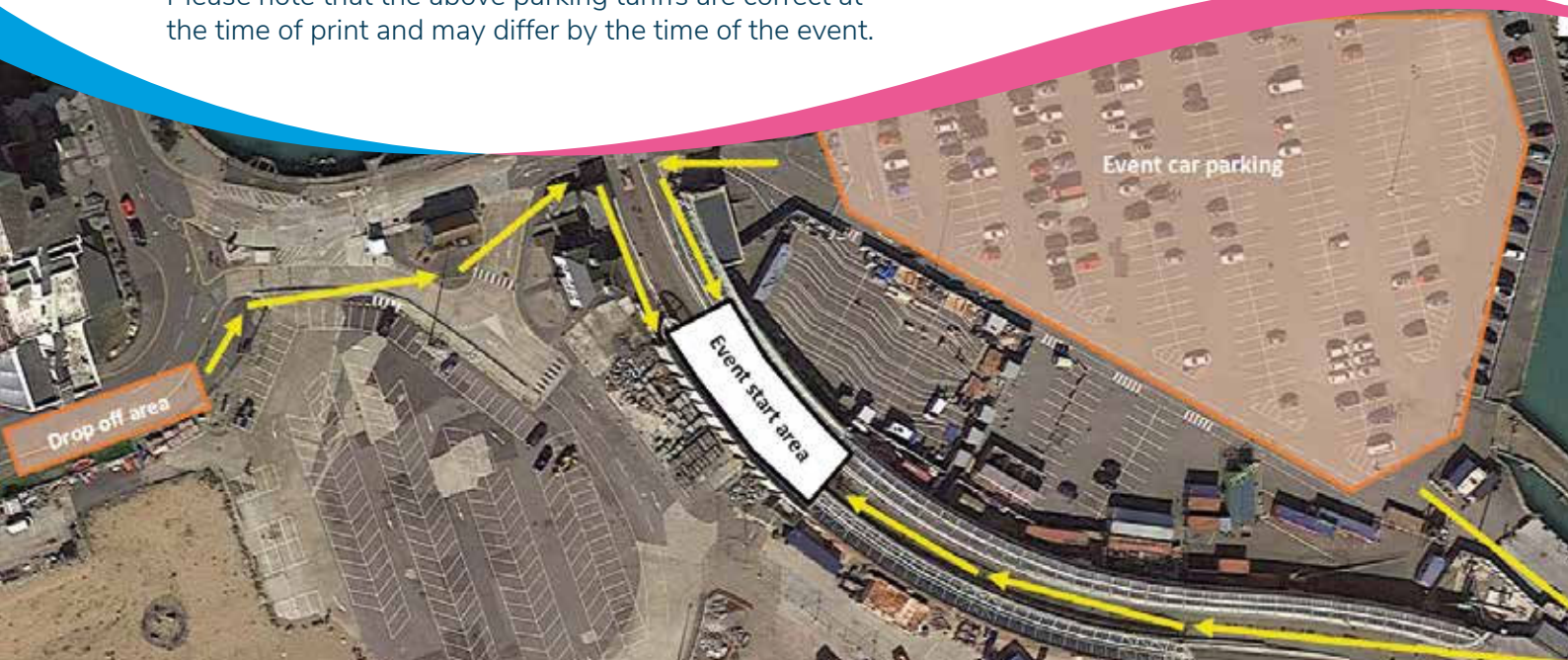
If you are being dropped off at the start of the event, please pull up further along **Marine Parade, CT20 1TX** and avoid entering the Pay and Display car park.

On-site parking

There is an on-site Pay and Display car park at the start venue. This car park operates via an automatic number plate recognition system and the all day tariff is £20. The full hourly tariff can be viewed at www.folkestoneparking.co.uk/tariff.

Other Pay and Display car parks are situated close by and operate an all day tariff of £8.40. Local on-street parking is also available nearby, the rates of which are available on the Pay and Display meters.

Please note that the above parking tariffs are correct at the time of print and may differ by the time of the event.



Upon arrival



Event HQ and start waves

In order to avoid congestion at the venue and early parts of the trail, you will be allocated a specific 30-minute **start wave** based on your expected pace and team. Your starting wave will be communicated to you within your participant pack and via email in the days prior to the Folkestone Downs Challenge. Please plan your arrival within your allocated starting wave as this allows us to run a safe and enjoyable event.

The start area will open at 7:30am for registration. **Please do not arrive before this time or before your allocated start wave.** Please wear your unique participant lanyard visibly when arriving at the event. Your lanyard enables you to access the event venues and catering services.

You will be allocated one of the following start waves:

Start wave A: check in between **07:30 - 08:00hrs**

Start wave C: check in between **08:30 - 09:00hrs**

Start wave B: check in between **08:00 - 08:30hrs**

Start wave D: check in between **09:00 - 09:30hrs**

Check-in and check-out process

Only registered participants should come into the event area during the morning starting period (no spectators or non-participants please). You should follow event signage to the pedestrianised old station area of Folkestone Harbour and queue using the designated area until a registration desk is available. While you wait for your turn, please respect the space of others.

Once checked in, proceed directly to the start line area, where you will be able to begin as soon as you are ready. Once you have been released, please cross the car park entrance carefully and walk across the swing bridge, following the orange route signage.

Hike completion and latest finish time: All participants must have completed the trail and checked-out back at the Folkestone Harbour Arm finish area by **1900hrs**. If you do not think you can complete the route within the specified time, you should inform event organisers immediately on the participant hotline 07710 854029. Due to limited access, we ask that spectators do not attend the rest stops along the route. However, they are welcome to meet you at the finish venue, where there is a selection of restaurants and eateries to enjoy a well-earned meal.

Did you know?

Pilgrims Hospices cares for thousands of patients each year in our three inpatient units in Ashford, Canterbury and Thanet, in our Therapy Centres and in patient's own homes.

The Route



A link to an online map of the route can be found on the Folkestone Downs Challenge event page: www.folkestonedownschallenge.org

The Folkestone Downs Challenge features a wide variety of landscapes and terrain, packed into a challenging 36km route. From flat canal paths to steep chalk-lined trails, rolling fields and forested walkways, the Folkestone Downs Challenge has it all and will challenge first-time and seasoned hikers alike.

36km route (View map): Starting from the Folkestone Harbour Arm, you'll climb to the height of Kent's famous white cliffs and enjoy breathtaking views over the English Channel, Folkestone and Romney Marsh beyond as you follow the chalk ridgeline westward.

Along the way, you'll pass Castle Hill, the site of an early Norman fortification, as well as the Folkestone White Horse, before reaching one of the highest points of the North Downs at Tolsford Hill (181m). From there, your trail descends through fields and woodland to the picturesque Lympne Castle, with a chance of glimpsing some exotic animals as you pass by Port Lympne Safari Park. Then, you'll join the scenic pathways of the Royal Military Canal through Hythe and Sandgate on your return to Folkestone's historic harbour.

3 ways to find your way

- 1)** We strongly recommend downloading the free **Pilgrims Hospices Event App** for iOS and Android devices as you can view detailed a route map that shows your current position so you can see if you deviate from the correct route.
 - 2)** Your lanyard contains maps of each section of the route.
 - 3)** The routes will be clearly signed with orange fluorescent signs with black arrows marked with the Pilgrims Hospices logo. Orange ribbon is also used as reassurance on some longer sections of the trail.
- **All hikers must sign out at the de-registration desks once they have completed the route.** We need to account for all participants at the end of the event and will call you if you have not checked out or haven't called to let us know that you have finished early or elsewhere.
 - If you are unable to complete your route, you **MUST** inform the organisers so that you are accounted for – please call or message the participant hotline **07710 854029** stating your name and participant number.
 - If there is a **medical emergency, you must call 999** and seek the help of the emergency services who are aware that the event is taking place. You should also call the **Event Medical Emergency Number (07535 631568)** so that event medics can be mobilised, as often they can arrive on scene faster than an ambulance.



Rest stops

There are four rest stops placed at regular intervals along the 36km route as well as an additional water station early on.



- **Start venue:** Folkestone Harbour Arm, CT20 1QH.
Refreshments available: water, flapjacks.

- **Water station:** The Valiant Sailor near Capel-le-Ferne (at 3km into the route).
Refreshments available: water.

- **Rest stop 1:** Castle Hill, Crete Road West, CT18 7AB (at 6.3km into the route). **Refreshments available:** water, squash, selection of pre-wrapped cakes (including fruit cake, lemon drizzle, chocolate brownie, and gluten free), bananas, flapjacks and sweets (vegan friendly).

- **Rest stop 2:** Tolsford Hill, CT18 8BZ (at 13.4km into the route). **Refreshments available:** water, tea, coffee, squash, cans, selection of rolls (ham salad, cheese salad, egg mayo, vegan and GF available), bananas, sweets and crisps.

- **Rest stop 3:** Lympne Village Hall, CT21 4LE (at 20.8km into the route). **Refreshments available:** water, tea, coffee, squash, cans, selection of rolls (ham salad, cheese salad, egg mayo, vegan and GF available), bananas, sweets and crisps.

- **Rest stop 4:** Tin Tabernacle, Hythe, CT21 6BD (at 28.8km into the route). **Refreshments available:** water, tea, coffee, squash, cans, hot soups with bread roll, selection of pre-wrapped cakes (including fruit cake, lemon drizzle, chocolate brownie, and gluten free), sweets and crisps.

Finish venue: Folkestone Harbour Arm, CT20 1QH.

Rest stop information

- Participants are advised to **bring any preferred snacks** to supplement the catering at rest stops along the route. A detailed breakdown of what is available at each rest stop is shown above to aid with planning.

- Participants are responsible for making sure that they remain hydrated throughout the day. It is recommended to **bring a full water bottle** (or two). Water stations will be available to refill at rest stops.

- Participants are encouraged to spend as little time as necessary at each rest stop and ideally 15 minutes maximum.

- Portable toilets will be available at each rest stop. Please join the queuing area and use the next available toilet, ensuring to use the hand sanitiser provided.

- There is an additional water station (detailed above). **Please be aware that there are no toilet facilities at this location.**

Keep the sun off your neck with the official Pilgrims Hospices neck scarf. Available at www.folkestonedownschallenge.org



Junctions of note

Please take note of the following sections of the route to avoid becoming lost or injured.

Distance into route: 3km
Location: Crossing of New Dover Road at the Valiant Sailor pub, Capel-le-Ferne

Just 3km into the route, after the first big climb, participants will reach the New Dover Road beside the Valiant Sailor pub. It is important to follow marshal instructions and signage down to the water station and to cross safely at the island.



DO NOT CROSS STRAIGHT OVER THIS BUSY ROAD.

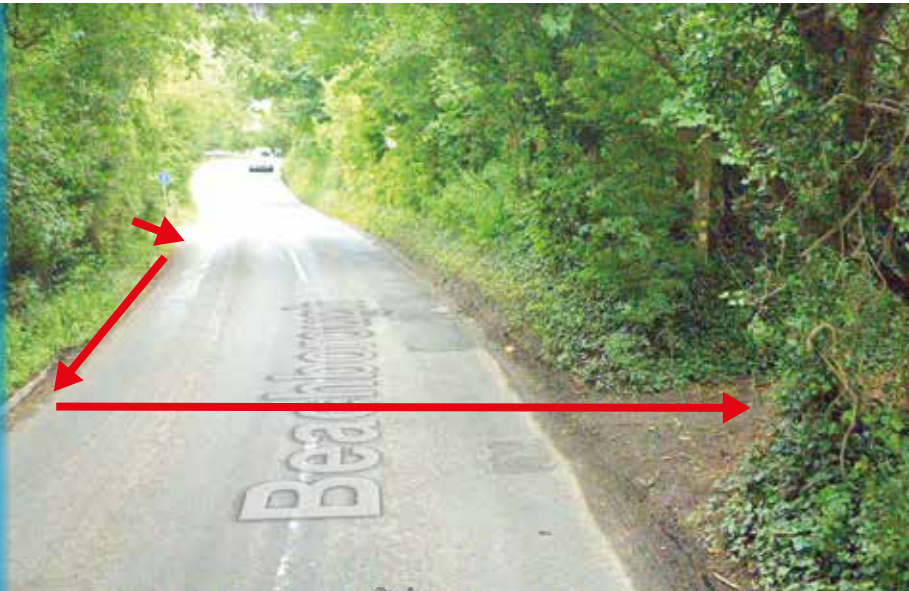


Distance into route: 4.8km
Location: Crossing of A260

At the end of Crete Road East, participants must cross the A260. This is a fast road but has good visibility in both directions. **Make sure that you are personally satisfied it is safe before crossing** and use the island.

Distance into route: 12km
Location: Crossing of Beachborough near Etchinghill

Shortly before reaching rest stop 2, participants must cross Beachborough Road. Be aware that this is a fast road and there is no pavement on the opposite side so pay extra attention before attempting to cross. The crossing is not direct so participants should observe the Highway Code and **walk on the right-hand side of the road** so they can see oncoming traffic before making the crossing.



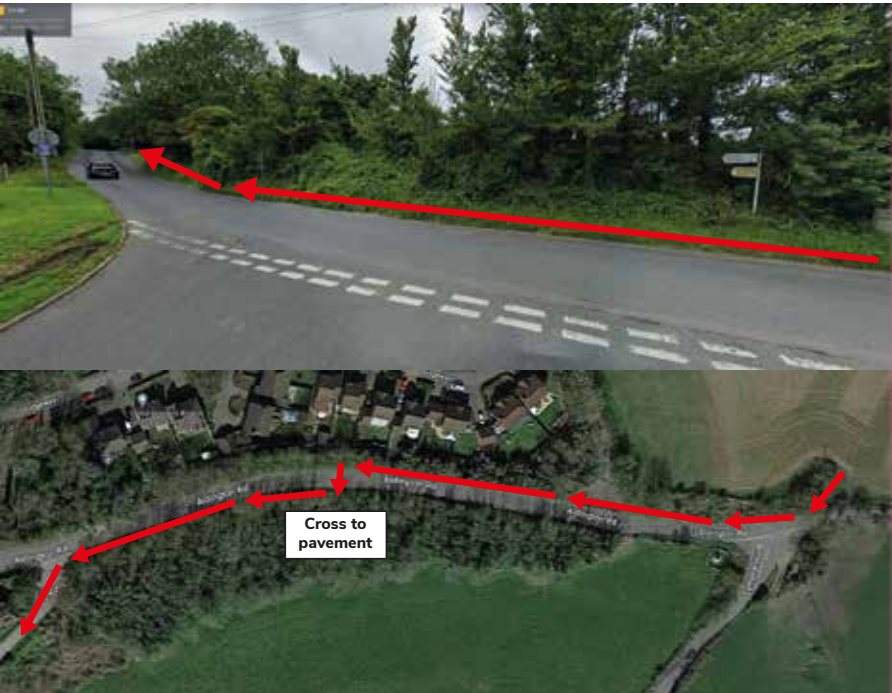
Distance into route: 15.2km
Location: Crossing of the A20

The A20 has good visibility but cars can be travelling fast so take extra care when crossing this road. Do not presume just because a participant crosses ahead of you that it is safe to follow them. Always check for yourself before crossing.



Junctions of note continued

Please take note of the following sections of the route to avoid becoming lost or injured.



Distance into route: 20km
Location: Aldington Road, Lympne

After passing through large fields, the route joins the road for approx. 200m before the village of Lympne.

Be aware that there is no pavement so participants should follow the Highway Code and **walk single file on the right-hand side of the road** so they can see oncoming vehicles.

Event marshals will be present to direct you. **You must ensure you are personally satisfied it is safe before crossing.**

Distance into route: 28km
Location: Crossing of A259, Hythe

After following the Royal Military Canal path for several kilometres, participants will reach the town of Hythe, and the crossing of the A259 beside the Hythe Steam Railway. Follow event signage to cross at the pedestrian crossing and continue along the canal path on the south side of the canal, in the direction of Folkestone.



The finish line

Everyone will receive a well-deserved medal upon completing the Folkestone Downs Challenge. Please ensure that you visit the de-registration desks to claim yours. If you'd prefer not to receive a medal, simply tell event staff and we will keep it for future use.

It is recommended that you arrange to be picked up after such a tiring challenge. However, if you are making your own way home, Folkestone bus station is approx. 15-minute walk (0.7 miles) from the Harbour Arm and local taxi companies are available.



Please wash your hands at the earliest opportunity upon leaving the event.

If you've taken pictures or video footage to remember the day, why not add them to the **Pilgrims Hospices Walking and Hiking Facebook Group**, on **Instagram** or tweet us at **@pilgrimshospice**.

Please do take a few minutes to complete the **online survey** afterwards that we will email to you. We really value your feedback and will use your comments to improve the event, and others, for future years.

Hiking for hospice care



Raising sponsorship

We need every Folkestone Downs challenger to show their support by pledging to raise as much sponsorship as they can through their challenge. After all, it's no mean feat to walk all that way!

Pilgrims Hospices relies on your generous contributions to provide specialist nursing care to thousands of patients living with incurable illness each year. By raising sponsorship, every mile you march will be making a real difference. **If every person could raise just £100 in sponsorship, together we could raise £50,000 for hospice care.**

Here are some top tips to help you maximise your fundraising efforts:

- You can start an **online sponsorship page here** which is a great way to share your fundraising efforts by social media and email. Your supporters can donate easily and the money comes directly to Pilgrims Hospices, meaning it's hassle-free for you too!
- Personalise your page with a story, target, photos and training updates to reflect your personality, what you are doing and why you're supporting Pilgrims Hospices.
- Shout about it – You're doing a wonderful thing! You're taking on a huge personal challenge and helping to support the care of thousands of local people while you do it! Be proud. Be enthusiastic – it's contagious!
- Help your sponsors see how their contribution makes a difference by relating their donation amount to something tangible. Here are a few examples of things your fundraising can will go towards. **£12** could pay for a patient's meals for a day, **£25** could pay for an hour of nursing care, **£35** could pay for therapy sessions for patients and carers, while **£50** could pay for essential nursing supplies.
- Encourage your friends and family to tick the Gift Aid checkbox when they sponsor you. This makes their donation worth 25% more to us at no extra cost to them.
- Did you know that about 20% of sponsorship is given after an event? Remember to do one last ask around just after you've completed your challenge. You might be surprised by a few late donations!
- Some people may prefer to sponsor you via a traditional **paper sponsorship form**, which you can download and print from the Pilgrims Hospices website. Please send a cheque for your final sponsorship total, along with your sponsorship form to: **Supporter Relations, Pilgrims Hospice, 56 London Road, Canterbury, Kent CT2 8JA** or **donate your collected sponsorship online** via the Pilgrims Hospices website if it's easier for you. If sending a cheque, please make them payable to Pilgrims Hospices in East Kent. Please try to have your sponsorship money to us by 1st October 2023.

We hope you have a great day and thank you so much for supporting Pilgrims Hospices!