40 Miles for 40 Years

To celebrate Ferring Country Centre's 40th anniversary, on Wednesday 15th July a team of cyclists took on the challenge of cycling 40 miles to help raise £4,000 towards a brand-new PA system for the charity's Day Service Customers. Taking on the challenge were Bob Rogers, Chairman; Nick Cook, Supporter; Anne Cook, Trustee; Robin Lenharth, Volunteer; Hannah Tombs, CEO; Hazel Sheward, CFO; and Claire Moyle, longtime supporter and fundraiser.

Setting off from Ferring Country Centre at 9:30am, the team made their first stop at the Arun View Inn before continuing to Walberton Pond. The team then arrived at Aldingbourne Country Centre for a well-earned coffee break, where they were welcomed with cheers and applause from Aldingbourne's Day Service Customers as they arrived.

The next stop was the RAF Tangmere Military Aviation Museum, which provided a fantastic photo opportunity for the cyclists. By 1pm, they had reached Apuldram, where they received another incredible welcome from Apuldram's Day Service Customers before enjoying a well-deserved lunch. With spirits still high, there was just enough time for one final stop at Bognor Regis Pier for an ice cream before the team's non-stop push back to Ferring Country Centre.

With temperatures reaching 32°C on Wednesday 15th July, the challenge was tough from the very start. As if the heat wasn't enough, the planned 40-mile route ended up being closer to 50 miles by the time the team returned to Ferring Country Centre. Despite the soaring temperatures and the unexpected extra miles, the cyclists kept smiling, tackling every mile with determination and arriving at each stop in great spirits.

Their return to Ferring Country Centre at 4:30pm was an emotional moment, with supporters gathered to cheer them home. The sense of pride and achievement was clear to see.

The new PA system will be used by the Day Service Customers for karaoke sessions, music activities and performances in the new dance studio, helping to build confidence, encourage creativity and bring even more joy to the people FCC supports.

Crucially, it will also enable the charity to host commercial events and celebrations, creating a valuable source of sustainable income at a time when charitable funding is increasingly stretched. A reliable, high-quality PA system will ensure everyone can be heard, included and celebrated.

The appeal has already raised an incredible £2,011.25 but with a fundraising target of £4,000, there is still a way to go. Every donation, no matter the size, will help bring the new PA system one step closer to becoming a reality.

Ferring Country Centre would like to say a huge thank you to everyone who has donated, cheered the team on along the route or supported the challenge behind the scenes. Every contribution has made a real difference, and with the appeal still short of its £4,000 target, the charity hopes the local community will continue to get behind the campaign.

A special thank you also goes to Pinnacle UK for generously sponsoring and producing the team's cycling T-shirts. Their support ensured the team looked the part throughout the challenge, and their generosity played an important role in making the event such a success.

Ferring Country Centre would also like to extend a heartfelt thank you to everyone at Aldingbourne Country Centre and Apuldram Centre for their incredible welcome and support. The warm reception from both centres, complete with cheers, smiles and encouragement from the Day Service Customers and staff, gave the cyclists an unforgettable boost and perfectly reflected the wonderful sense of community shared between organisations supporting people with learning disabilities. Their kindness, generosity and enthusiasm made the day even more special, and it was a privilege to share this milestone with them.

As Ferring Country Centre celebrates 40 years of supporting people with learning disabilities, the "40 Miles for 40 Years" challenge is a wonderful reminder of the generosity, community spirit and support that has been at the heart of the charity for four decades. *“Ferring Country Centre has travelled a very long way since it started 40 years ago and we wanted our journey to reflect, in some small way, the effort and hard work that has made the Centre the success it is today.”* – Bob Rogers, Chairman.

About Ferring Country Centre

Ferring Country Centre is an independent charity supporting people with learning disabilities through meaningful work, skills development and social opportunities. Alongside its Day Service, the Centre welcomes thousands of visitors each year to Dales Farm, Rangers Café, the Riding School, the Garden Centre and a wide range of family activities and experiences. To find out more about Ferring Country Centre or to plan a trip please visit: www.ferringcountrycentre.org. Or to donate to the 40 Miles for 40 Years Appeal please visit: https://ferringcountrycentre.org/fundraising/40-miles-for-40-years/