

National Grid's Darren puts the boot into cancer

Sheffield-based gas supervisor honoured for charity fundraising

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- **National Grid's Darren Fitzpatrick leads colleagues in £18,000 fundraisers for Macmillan Cancer Support**
- **National Grid staff generate £600,000 for Macmillan**

A Sheffield-based National Grid gas supervisor, who led more than 50 colleagues on two of Britain's most gruelling charity fundraisers, has won special recognition for his efforts.

Darren Fitzpatrick persuaded colleagues from across the country to join him on an 84-mile trek along Hadrian's Wall and a 24-hour dash up the three highest peaks in England, Scotland and Wales.

Braving blistered feet, swollen ankles and pulled hamstrings, they raised £18,000 for Macmillan Cancer Support, helping National Grid generate more than £600,000 for the charity. The cash will be used for over 3,000 emergency fuel grants to help cancer patients struggling to heat their homes.

Emergency Supervisor Darren, who works from National Grid's Effingham Street Depot, was presented with an award by National Grid and Macmillan Cancer Support on Tuesday (9 February). The two organisations held a celebration at National Grid's UK headquarters in Warwick to mark the finale of a two-year fundraising partnership and to thank staff for their efforts.

Darren said: "I'm very proud to receive this award but it was a real team effort. I'm so proud of everybody that took part in the Three Peaks and Hadrian's Wall – everybody pulled together and supported each other. My mum was diagnosed with brain cancer. She's made a full recovery but it was a battle so I really wanted to raise money for Macmillan Cancer Support and the fantastic work they do."

A veteran hiker and climber, Doncaster-born Darren rallied colleagues for the Three Peaks Challenge – scaling Ben Nevis, Snowdon and Scafell Pike in just 24 hours. Word spread, and soon he'd recruited some 50 staff from across South Yorkshire and the East Midlands.

When Darren proposed a second challenge – Hadrian's Wall - colleagues from as far afield as Gloucester, Solihull and East Anglia were quick to heed the call. Fifty-three walkers, backed by a 20-strong volunteer support team, braved atrocious weather to tackle the 84-mile trail.

And Darren has already recruited colleagues for a further charity fundraising venture in June – a 24-hour, 66-mile hike around the Isle of Wight – to raise money for Kidney Research UK and the Doncaster and Bassetlaw Kidney Association. However, not before he completes the Wolf Run and the Sheffield Half-Marathon!

"I think I want locking up!" he jokes.

Over the last 24 months National Grid employees have thrown themselves into a host of fundraising activities in aid of Macmillan Cancer Support. In a two-year fundraising partnership, voted for by employees, staff smashed their half-a-million-pounds target. Every penny raised by employees in 2015 was matched by National Grid.

Chris Train, National Grid's Director of Gas Distribution, has championed the Macmillan partnership at National Grid. He said: "I am incredibly proud of our employees. No-one should face cancer alone and through this magnificent achievement our employees have shown that we are a company that cares.

"Thanks to their tireless fundraising efforts, people living with cancer and their families will receive the vital support they need. All the money raised will be used for Macmillan's emergency fuel grants, which means those living with cancer can keep warm without worrying about heating bills."

Describing the partnership with National Grid as one of Macmillan's 'shining stars', Alix Wooding, Head of Corporate Partnerships at Macmillan, said : "We would like to thank National Grid and all its employees for their enduring support and for helping us make sure no-one has to face cancer alone.

"Nearly one in five people living with cancer turn the heating off, even though they feel cold because they're worried about paying their bills. Over the last two years National Grid and Macmillan have worked together to help change this.

"Being warm is a fundamental part of the recovery process and the impact of our work funding heating grants is immediate, profound and long lasting. The money National Grid have raised will make such a big difference to people affected by cancer."

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Notes for editors

About Macmillan Cancer Support

When you have cancer, you don't just worry about what will happen to your body, you worry about what will happen to your life. Whether it's concerns about who you can talk to, planning for the extra costs or what to do about work, at Macmillan we understand how a cancer diagnosis can take over everything.

That's why we're here. We provide support that helps people take back control of their lives. But right now, we can't reach everyone who needs us. We need your help to make sure that people affected by cancer get the support they need to face the toughest fight of their life. No one should face cancer alone, and with your support no one will.

To get involved, call **0300 1000 200** today. And please remember, we're here for you too. If you'd like support, information or just to chat, call us free on **0808 808 00 00** (Monday to Friday, 9am-8pm) or visit macmillan.org.uk

Notes to Editors:

National Grid is pivotal to the energy systems in the UK and the north eastern United States. We aim to serve customers well and efficiently, supporting the communities in which we operate and making possible the energy systems of the future.

National Grid in the UK:

- We own and operate the electricity transmission network in England and Wales, with day-to-day responsibility for balancing supply and demand. We also operate, but do not own, the Scottish networks. Our networks comprise approximately 7,200 kilometres (4,474 miles) of overhead line, 1,500 kilometres (932 miles) of underground cable and 342 substations.
- We own and operate the gas National Transmission System in Great Britain, with day-to-day responsibility for balancing supply and demand. Our network comprises approximately 7,660 kilometres (4,760 miles) of high-pressure pipe and 618 above-ground installations.

- As Great Britain's System Operator (SO) we make sure gas and electricity is transported safely and efficiently from where it is produced to where it is consumed. From April 2019, Electricity System Operator (ESO) is a new standalone business within National Grid, legally separate from all other parts of the National Grid Group. This will provide the right environment to deliver a balanced and impartial ESO that can realise real benefits for consumers as we transition to a more decentralised, decarbonised electricity system.
- Other UK activities mainly relate to businesses operating in competitive markets outside of our core regulated businesses; including interconnectors, gas metering activities and a liquefied natural gas (LNG) importation terminal – all of which are now part of National Grid Ventures. National Grid Property is responsible for the management, clean-up and disposal of surplus sites in the UK. Most of these are former gas works.

Find out more about the energy challenge and how National Grid is helping find solutions to some of the challenges we face

at <https://www.nationalgrid.com/group/news>

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