

PRESS RELEASE

04/04/2019

CooperBurnett team to cycle from London to Paris in 24 hours in aid of Brain Tumour Research

Five team members from the Tunbridge Wells-based law firm CooperBurnett - Victoria Sampson, Joseph Oates, John Spence, Katie Hilsdon and Gareth Warner - are embarking on an epic cycling challenge from London to Paris with the goal of completing the 300km that involves in just 24 hours.

The team is coming together to raise money for the charity Brain Tumour Research in memory of Katie Hilsdon's cousin, Oli Hilsdon, who died in January from an aggressive and incurable brain tumour (a glioblastoma multiforme) aged just 26.

Oli had just graduated from Cambridge when, in August 2014, he had a seizure completely out of the blue. Tests were run and he was diagnosed with a brain tumour and given the devastating prognosis of 12 to 18 months to live.

Oli proved the doctors wrong and, after undergoing treatment was given the all clear. He then went on to fundraise for Brain Tumour Research himself, including running the London Marathon in 2016.

Unfortunately, more tests revealed the tumour had returned and Oli underwent brain surgery to remove the affected tumour and embarked on more chemotherapy treatment and immunotherapy. Devastatingly, this proved unsuccessful and, in January this year, he died at home surrounded by his

family – including his new wife Gigi – just days before this 27th birthday.

The team from CooperBurnett has come together to cycle from London to Paris in 24 hours – a challenge which is usually undertaken over three to four days. Any money raised will be match-funded by the firm; CooperBurnett has set a target of raising £15,000.

The vision of the charity Brain Tumour Research is to ‘find a cure for brain tumours’. Brain tumours are indiscriminate; they can affect anyone at any age and they kill more children and adults under the age of 40 than any other cancer. However the charity says that, historically, just 1% of the national spend on cancer research has been allocated to this devastating disease. Brain Tumour Research is determined to change this.

Those team members who don’t feel up to the road trip to Paris are being given the opportunity to take part in a relay race on a static bike in the CooperBurnett office to see which team ‘gets to Paris’ first.

“Everybody here was struck by Oli’s story and his persistence to keep going,” says Victoria Sampson, Partner and Head of Corporate and Commercial Services. “With this in mind, we will be pulling together even more as a team to raise as much money as we can for Brain Tumour Research in Oli’s memory. My partners and I will be encouraging people to donate all they can afford so we can proudly match it.”

The team will set off from Blackheath in London on Saturday 4 May before cycling 95km through Surrey and catching an overnight ferry to Dieppe. From there, they hope to complete the final 205km into Paris within 24 hours.

“When we found out Oli’s tumour had recurred, it was a devastating blow to us all, but Oli always remained positive,” says Associate Solicitor, Katie Hilsdon, Oli’s cousin. “Oli’s death left a huge hole in the hearts of all his friends and family. He touched the lives of so many people, he always put others before himself and we will miss him every day.”

She adds: “The important thing is to raise awareness and funds for research. Less than 20% of brain tumour patients survive beyond five years, as compared with an average of 50% across all cancers. We have to do something to change this.”

Click here to support CooperBurnett in its fundraising:

<https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/cooperburnettlondontoparis>

[ends]
