



Venturing near and far for  
Practical Action



## Welcome to Venturing Near and Far for Practical Action.....

In the last year alone, one new person was helped by Practical Action every minute of the year. Practical Action's projects have helped to improve the lives of 792,000 people in some of the world's poorest communities across 13 countries. A fantastic achievement that was only possible because of our dedicated supporters.

2008 has been another busy year at Practical Action and in particular for our intrepid Venturers, *supporters who undertake a challenge / sponsored fundraising event for us*. They have literally gone the extra mile in the raising of both funds and awareness for Practical Action. With such passion, enthusiasm and total dedication to our cause they are a real inspiration.

Many have spoken of the generosity they were shown by strangers during their ventures, which is well summed up by our very own Pilgrim, Benedict: *"Some people were so kind, so loving, so generous and so open it left me astounded and elated. I wouldn't say it restored my faith in humanity, it gave me faith in humanity which was amazing."*

With very special thanks to all of our Venturers, I hope that you enjoy reading about what some have been up to!

Best Wishes

*Michaela*

If you are feeling inspired to be a Practical Action Venturer - remember you'll get your very own Practical Action t-shirt! - please contact us at:

E: [events@practicalaction.co.uk](mailto:events@practicalaction.co.uk)  
T: 01926 634400

*Thank You!*

Over the summer, Dani & David travelled on foot (well, mostly) from Cape Wrath to the Lizard

**In their own words:**

**WHY?** Curiosity about our country having travelled abroad over many years. Decided to take time to travel from the most north-

western point in Scotland to the most southern point in England .

**WHY PRACTICAL ACTION?** 'Cos we're 'children of the 60's' and firmly believe in Schumacher's 'Small is Beautiful' philosophy **THE TRIP!** A very special experience. Sinking into a simple daily pattern of walking and camping (with the occasional luxury of hostels and B&B!). Vivid memories of yellow spring gorse in Scotland to late summer purple heathers in Cornwall. Warm memories of people's generosity. Lots of fun and laughter. Lots of porridge and mars bars. Lots of 'weather'! And, last, but not least... money for Practical Action's projects.



### Three Peaks in 24 Hours

**Two Pauls and two Adams did it with 8 minutes to spare!**

The four mates decided to put their passion for walking and climbing into action. In June they climbed the three highest peaks in Britain within 24 hours to raise over £600 for Practical Action.



**Thomas, Henning, Catherine, Martin and Simon ran in the Bath Half Marathon, Three Forts Marathon, Nike 10K Race, Plymouth Half Marathon and Halstead & Essex Marathon to raise funds and awareness for Practical Action's Projects**



### Cover Story

In June, David climbed Alpamayo in Peru to raise funds for Practical Action and was keen to put something back into the local community: *"Having spent some time with the local guides and heard of the real value to them of electricity in local villages, it confirmed to me the value in helping towards the funds needed."* David's fantastic support will help fund a generator for a micro-hydro scheme to bring precious electricity to some of the most remote and isolated communities.

David is continuing to fundraise and is very close to his target of £2,100



It was a great trip for many reasons, but mainly because of the beautiful countryside that I was able to ride through, eating local foods such as the fantastic oatcakes in Scotland, and vegetable pasties in Cornwall, and the many acts of kindness I encountered from strangers, from simply pointing me in the right direction or refilling my water bottle to sponsoring me or even offering me a place to stay for the night instead of me needing to camp.

James  
Raised over £1000  
Cycling from John O'Groats to  
Lands End  
October/ November 2008

I feel that any aid or development provided to communities must not just provide a short-term solution, but aim to provide solutions in a long-term sustainable way, working with local people - which I believe is something that Practical Action does successfully.

**Danny completed the Helvellyn Triathlon 2008 in September and raised over £3,000 for Practical Action. Here's what he said:**

*"It's a really sad story that the impacts of climate change are felt most strongly by those who are least able to deal with them. These impacts come in various forms (droughts, flooding, soil erosion, infestation, land-slides, etc), and the people affected are widespread.*

*I chose Practical Action because they help with practical & technological solutions to everyday problems for people who have very little indeed. They work around the world, in South America, Africa and Asia, and the solutions they apply vary widely, but have one thing in common, they are appropriate."*

**Hugo took part in the Durham Big Bike Ride in September and raised £295.**

Hugo said "my friend lost his chain three times (after taking out a link each time it was a lot shorter by the end of the race!). We also stopped to repair someone's tyre. Well if you're committed to charity you're committed to helping others, even if it upsets your race time!"



Alan raised £1246 by taking part in the Great Edinburgh 10K Race

*"It's been great for me to be able to take some practical action of my own to help your work, and I'm delighted the fundraising has gone so well. I think that people really identify with the idea of what Practical Action does, and with some of the initiatives it's taken, so that's made my job of persuading people to part with their cash a lot easier!"*

## Dusk 'til Dawn Cycle Race



Long-time Practical Action supporter David swapped his QC's wig for a cycle helmet and took part with Rick, a fellow-member of Suffolk's renowned TROG mountain bike club, in October's Dusk til Dawn race in Thetford Forest. Unfortunately the race was held in the tail-end of Tropical Storm Laura, which brought driving rain throughout the night. 1000 riders soon reduced the forest singletrack and bomb-holes to a most un-East Anglian morass. The pair alternated increasingly muddy laps for 13.5 hours, performing to the top of their ability and raising nearly £4000 for Practical Action. "It was a two-way thing", said David. "The race brought in the sponsors - and the thought of the sponsorship kept me in the race."

Benedict put his best foot forward for 1,200 mile walk and has raised over £35,000 so far...

Benedict started his pilgrimage on Monday April 28th, and arrived in Rome on Saturday July 26th. He followed a traditional pilgrimage route along the Via Francigena. Starting in Canterbury, he crossed the channel as a foot passenger, walked down through France, across the Alps in Switzerland and then through Italy to Rome. Benedict had many motivations for his trip; as well as having the opportunity to explore his Christian faith further in peace and isolation; he hoped the trip would allow him time to reflect on his life, the future and get to know himself better.

Benedict said, *"The sense of achievement is just starting to sink in. The sense of relief is mixed with a sense of sorrow that a wonderful experience has come to an end; however, I feel that I have achieved everything I set out to achieve and more. Thank you so much to all the people who have supported me throughout the whole thing."*

While sponsorship was not his motivation for doing the walk, Practical Action was his chosen charity as he admires our ethos of empowering people and giving them the resources to be able to make their own choices, now and for generations to come.



You can read all about Benedict's journey at: [www.justgiving.com/benedictprotheroe](http://www.justgiving.com/benedictprotheroe)

### Somerset raised over £3,000 from his Coast to Coast of Scotland Walk

In May Somerset undertook a coast to coast walk across Scotland of more than 200 miles. As a hill farmer, lambing season of his 400 blackface-ewe flock brought plenty of training in hill walking. As well as taking in the breathtaking scenery, Somerset was keen to raise awareness for Practical Action, and in particular to raise money for our micro-hydro work in Peru.

## Royal Parks Half Marathon



**CONGRATULATIONS** and a big **THANK YOU** to Robin, Nick, Jenni, Gillian, Ros, Henry, Richard, Bogdan, Sean and Bill - our ten runners who competed in and completed the Royal Parks Half Marathon in October 2008. They said:

*"Really enjoyed Sunday - my legs are still a bit sore from it but I'm sure that's good for me! Thanks again for the support and I'm glad I could be of some help to your charity."*

*"It was a brilliant run and a great day for it (it was a little warm for me at times though!)"*

*"It was a great occasion and a particularly lovely day. Many thanks for the opportunity of doing this."*

Collectively they have raised over £5,250 and the money is still coming in .....FANTASTIC!!!!

**We hope to have places available for next year's race so if you are interested, please let us know.**



Andrew said *"I am delighted to say that on Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> May, in temperatures approaching 80°F, I successfully completed the Just Walk Big 60 challenge. Starting at Goodwood racecourse at 9:15 am about 120 of us set off to raise funds for our nominated charities. The first 12 or so kilometres were a breeze. It was still cool and the ground was flat. Then the sun came out and we had a punishing 20km across open fields and flood plains. I think many of use were having doubts at that stage and I was completely sapped by the 35km mark. Fortunately, the organisers were on hand to revive us with hot chilli and pints of water (they knew what lay ahead!). Suitably refreshed we strode out to be presented with 3km of steep uphill walking on loose chalk tracks. From then on it was blister plasters, glucose tablets and painkillers! The organisation was fantastic with medics clammering to use their first aid skills on anyone who even looked like they might be limping! Night set in and given that the walkers were now well spread out I spent the last 8 km on my own in the woods, armed only with a glow stick. Finally, Goodwood came into sight and, no longer in complete control of my right hip, I crossed the finish line in the top 20 walkers at 10.25pm."*

You can do a 10K, 20k, 40K or 60K **Just Walk**. Please get in touch for details

**Andrew raised £481 by completing the Just Walk Big 60 Challenge in May**



Alison on the summit of Kala Patthar (5560m) with Everest Base Camp and Everest behind her. "I'm actually perched right on the edge - the bodies of water behind me are reasonable size lakes way down below, not just puddles that I could step back into!"

Alison wanted to do something significant to mark her half-century! So in November she trekked to Everest Base Camp, in aid of Practical Action. On returning Alison said

*"I'm back, and I survived, though my goodness, was it HARD!!!!!! The label "extreme" attached to the trek was definitely not an exaggeration, with the demanding terrain, basic conditions, very cold nights (though lovely sunny clear skies during the day), illness (mainly D & V, but also altitude sickness and the "Khumbu cough", and sheer physical exertion. However it was a very special experience, leaving me with indelible memories of stunning and ever-changing scenery, the like of which I never expect to see again. Some of the most memorable moments were getting up in the middle of the night and seeing shooting stars by the dozen, and bright white shiny mountains reflecting the light of the full moon....."*

*We were looked after incredibly well by the local support team, and there was lots of good company, mutual support, chat, laughter and pretty basic lavatorial humour (you had to laugh, in the end!) which made it all much more bearable.*

*We all had our own reasons for undertaking the challenge, but for each of us, knowing that we were raising money for something we believed in was an important part in spurring us on. I shan't be repeating the project again in the foreseeable future, but I'm glad I did it!*

*It's been great to know that my support for Practical Action has been valued."*



Ben and Thomas took part in the Edinburgh Marathon in May (although not together) and raised an impressive £2,600 between them.

Ben said of his supporters "the generosity spurred me to limp in at 3hrs50, and contrary to popular belief, my left leg didn't fall off (much as I thought it might beforehand)."

**Felicity said of her Tuscany Three Peaks Challenge:**

**"Thanks for your support, the trek went really well and I think I can even do something more challenging next time! I loved Adventure Cafe, everyone was really friendly and the leaders were definitely people you could trust with your lives!"**  
**Felicity raised £482!**

**Andrew said of his Saigon to Angkor Wat Cycle Challenge:**

**"It was a great experience and the added pain (from a flu - virus and bad reaction to the malaria tablets) somehow seemed to make the fund-raising aspect of the trip assume an even greater significance than it might otherwise have done. It was certainly good to know that someone somewhere was benefitting from my discomfort!"**



Victoria raised around £1,000 for Practical Action by shaving her head! The hair was then sent to a different charity that makes wigs for kids with alopecia and cancer.



**Landy Rally Charity Drive 2008, 2500miles, 10 countries, 7 days**



This year we were lucky enough to have two teams take up the challenge of the Landy Rally, in support of Practical Action - Paul & Chris and Vanessa & Guy. Paul had been inspired by practical action he had seen on the ground in Malawi and thought that this was a fantastic opportunity to both raise awareness of Practical Action whilst raising vital funds. Tragically, Paul was killed in a motorcycle accident just the week before the event was due to take place. Although extremely upset,

Vanessa and Guy redoubled their efforts to raise as much as they could flying the flag for both Practical Action and for Paul himself whose sense of adventure and fun lives on. The combined fundraising and money from Paul's Memorial service, which was so kindly donated by his loved ones, is now in the region of £4,000.

## More special thanks goes to our dedicated venturers who have taken on their second and even third challenges in support of Practical Action this year....



Robin & Charlotte at the finish point in Anchorage

Following their successful rally to Australia in 2005, in May and June 2008 Robin & Charlotte drove from Panama to Alaska. They were in a group of 16 classic cars and drove for over 11,000 miles through 9 countries.

*"We have had a great time, met many interesting people along the way and seen some amazing places."*

By using a novel fundraising scheme, Charlotte and Robin sent a postcard from each destination in return for a donation and have raised a wonderful £6,500.

Go to [www.robinandcharlotte.co.uk](http://www.robinandcharlotte.co.uk) to read about their amazing journey.

12 year old Joshua completed his 3rd sponsored walk in memory of his grandfather and in support of Practical Action. He raised a much appreciated £100 to fund a filter tank to prevent water contamination and will benefit 100 households

Gill did the Bristol 10K and raised £190. She has previously done the Bristol Half Marathon for Practical Action - twice!

In 1991, Hilary supported ITDG by doing a solo run from Lhasa to Khatmandu (the Roof of the World run), something which has yet to be repeated.

This year, along with her team - The Serpentine Golden Girls, Hilary competed in the Race Across America bike race. A 3,000 mile coast-to-coast journey across the United States—from the Pacific in California to the Atlantic in Maryland, through the desert of Arizona, over the Rocky Mountains and across the prairies of the Mid West.

The Golden Girls finished the race in 8 days 5 hrs and 19 minutes - The oldest female team of four to finish ever! Absolutely fantastic! An amazing feat in which they also raised over £2,000 for Practical Action.



Nicola, Karl, Edward & Jane had the target this year to double their 2007 fundraising from their Snowdon climb and make £1,000 for Practical Action. Nicola said *"We've been spurred on to do this having seen more of their amazing work at a recent Supporters Day. Truly, your money could not be better spent."*

This year they walked the 12 miles from Poppit Sands to Newport. Karl said *"I liked the walk but it was tougher than Snowdon!"*. They also went backpacking and shaking tins at the local supermarket which *"wasn't quite such fun."* said Edward, *"But it's very character-building for all of us!!"* said Nicola. *"It was hard work but I am over the moon that we've actually raised £200 more than we needed! We met people who raved about ITDG (as Practical Action were previously known) and had been supporting the charity for years, and introduced others to Practical Action's wonderful work, which was most rewarding and very necessary."*



Having previously swum the English Channel and cycled from John O'Groats to Land's End for Practical

Action's Projects, this year adventurous Jamie tackled Japan! Along with two friends and his brother, he cycled across the length of Japan, from Fukuoka to Tokyo.

In 2010 he plans to climb Everest, so watch this space!

## Thank you to everyone who ventured near and far for Practical Action

For more information on taking part in a fundraising challenge for Practical Action or for help and advice on setting up your own event please see our website: [www.practicalaction.org/challenge](http://www.practicalaction.org/challenge) send an email to [events@practicalaction.org.uk](mailto:events@practicalaction.org.uk) or call us on 01926 634400 and we'll do all that we can to help.

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