

Andy Morrison Completes Great North Swim for Caravan

As a long standing supporter of Caravan, I've been involved in many group events to raise money for our charity over the years, but never done anything by myself. So having lost some weight and wanting to keep the momentum going, I decided to give myself a challenge and raise some money for our charity in the process.

The Great North Swim involved swimming a mile in Windermere on the 19th June 2011. The distance was enough of a challenge; equal to 64 lengths of a swimming pool, but the bigger challenge was expected water temperature of 15 degrees, which also required me to find a wetsuit that would fit...

Having trained in a pool for about four months, I was swimming a mile in around 35mins and feeling pretty confident – time for my first outdoor swim. Ellerton Lake is 65 acres of crystal clear water, which was at 12 degrees when I stupidly dived in – the pool is 29 degrees. This was quite a shock to the system – the cold just saps your energy and I could swim nothing like the distance I was achieving in the pool. However, with more practice over the next few weeks I increased my distance and by early June was ready for the swim.



Sunday the 19th arrived, and along with another 250 people (9,000 over the three days) I did my mile, getting round in a fairly respectable time of 37:31. I was exhausted, but I survived - a 46 year old died on Saturday in the same event, and a 60 year old man was in hospital following a heart attack in the water; I think that shows it really is a challenge to be respected !

My final total raised was some £1,328, which went straight to Caravan via JustGiving. A big thank you goes to all who have supported me, especially my family, who cheered me all the way, and my training buddy Steve, who matched every stroke.

I might do the 2 mile challenge in 2012 – so what could you do for Caravan?