

Helen is 'climbing' Kilimanjaro – every single day

Helen Wass O'Donnell is a self-confessed mad person.

And the challenge she is undertaking is a little bit of madness too. Helen has health challenges which in anyone with less courage would mean she ought to be sitting at home.

The purpose of her challenge is to raise funds for the [MS Therapy Centre Lothian](#) by 'climbing' Kilimanjaro without leaving Edinburgh. Until autumn last year she was training with a band of eight equally mad friends before a planned trip to Kilimanjaro this year.



Helen Wass O'Donnell on her race runner at Cramond 20 August
PHOTO ©2020 The Edinburgh Reporter

Sadly, due to a serious fall, as well as travel restrictions because of Covid-19, Helen could not complete her challenge. So she has got herself a special bike called a racerunner. This is a kind of assisted walking trike and Helen is going to walk 3.663 miles each day which is the height in miles of Mt Kilimanjaro.

The intrepid Helen is walking every day, usually down at Cramond where we met up with her, and hopes to achieve her goal by the first week in September. By then she will have completed about 120 miles or so. Today she was accompanied by her neighbour Caroline who pops up in the video!







As well as her recent fall, Helen has Multiple Sclerosis and Brainstem Encephalitis, both conditions which affect her ability to walk. Helen has used the therapy centre and explained what it is like.

She said: “The MS centre is a brilliant place where a wide range of people gather for group and individual therapy, hyperbaric oxygen therapy, physiotherapy, massage, Reiki, hypnotherapy, pilates, yoga, and a great cup of tea and a natter. Their support for me over the last ten plus years has been brilliant!! They are an amazing bunch of dedicated professionals and volunteers and the centre needs as much support as possible, especially during the coronavirus crisis.”

Meet Helen who is ‘climbing’ Kilimanjaro every day to raise funds for the [@MSTherapyCentre](#) with her bespoke Road Runner and donate on her Just Giving page pic.twitter.com/1YYilanH9p

– Edinburgh Reporter (@EdinReporter) [August 20, 2020](#)

Helen is also a bit of champion as she has taken part in some races with her racerunner. She said: "I can't walk unaided, I need a stick so this is quite a challenge for me. But I first got the trike after trying one out in a park in Tranent. I have competed a couple of times – in fact I'm the Scottish champion over 50 metres or something like that. There were only about seven or eight people in the race mind you! They are thinking of making this an Olympic sport so I might be an Olympic champion yet!"

You can support Helen [here](#)

