

Ciara leads Lochend boxing group's hike for The Yard

Eleven Edinburgh boxers have punched above their weight by raising nearly £3,000 for a local children's charity.

The mixed gender group from Lochend Boxing Club, aged 26 to 60, completed a hike up the Lairig Ghru, the best-known hill pass in Scotland, in just over nine hours.

The 19-mile walk climbs to an altitude of 835 metres and crosses through the central Cairngorms, one of the wildest areas in the country.

Following the club's hike up Ben Nevis last year, Saturday's mammoth fundraising effort was led by local mum Ciara O'Connor, whose son attends The Yard.

The Yard works with children and young people aged 0-25 with Additional Support Needs through adventure play sessions in Edinburgh, Dundee and Kirkcaldy. The service offers creative and inclusive play experiences in a well-supported environment, alongside wraparound support for the whole family, with a varied programme of drop-in, respite and transition youth clubs, early years, specialist sessions with schools, family play sessions, plus inclusive play and disability training.

Ciara said: "I've been boxing since I moved to Edinburgh just over 10 years ago and, from my very first visit, found Lochend Boxing Club so supportive and welcoming. It's a club for everyone, enjoyed by people of all fitness levels and from all

walks of life. They work around their members, adjusting training where required and making it work for you. I even boxed when I was pregnant and formed many great friendships through the club.

“The Yard, in some ways, is the same. It’s such a welcoming, non-judgemental space and has made a huge difference to my son and our family, so we wanted to give back as a club. The training has been a huge commitment, with some very early morning training walks in all weather across the Pentlands, various Munros and the West Highland Way. However, everyone has rallied around and supported us. Their response is a testament to the values of the club, that constant support and encouragement.

“ I’m very grateful to everyone who donated and know the money will make a huge difference to The Yard, and the many other families who have come to rely on their kindness.”

Celine Sinclair, Chief Executive Officer of The Yard, added: “We love nothing more than receiving positive feedback from our families, so when they choose to support our charity through fundraising, it’s really special, and we’re exceptionally grateful. The Yard is all about community, support and enjoying life’s adventures and Ciara and her fellow boxers encapsulate these values. Thanks again for supporting us, Lochend Boxing Club!”

- To donate to Ciara and the club’s campaign, please visit <https://www.justgiving.com/page/ciara-oconnor-1723449713057>

For more information about The Yard, visit <https://www.theyardscotland.org.uk/>



These Lochend boxing club hikers raised nearly£3000 for The Yard which provides adventure play for children with additional needs.