

# Pilgrims Way Challenge

Saturday 20 June 2026



Your support  
helps us be there  
for the next  
family that  
needs us

*Pre-event information*



Thank you for entering the award-winning, 8th annual Pilgrims Way Challenge on Saturday 20 June 2026. The essential information is listed below to ensure that you have a safe and enjoyable hike, all whilst raising money for a worthwhile cause. Participant safety is our highest priority and we hope you will understand that all measures have been put in place to ensure the safety of everyone involved.

## Important numbers for event day

**Participant hotline (event day only):** 07710 854029

**Medical emergencies:** 07537 152310

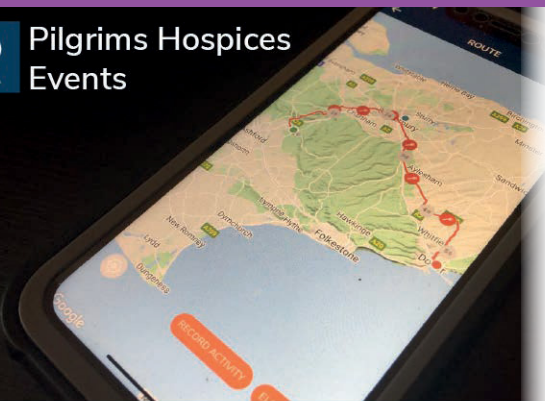
**Advance event enquiries:** 01227 782062 or [fundraising@pilgrimshospices.org](mailto:fundraising@pilgrimshospices.org)

## Recommended apps

To ensure you have a safe and enjoyable hike, it is recommended that you download the following **free apps** to your smartphone:



Pilgrims Hospices  
Events



The **Pilgrims Hospices Event App** (available for **iOS** and **Android** devices). It's free to download from the **App Store** and **Google Play** and allows you to view a detailed map of your chosen route, including your current location, to keep you on track all the way to the finish. **Please note:** You do not need a MapMyTracks account, or to sign into the Pilgrims Event App in order to see your location on route maps. **However, you do need to give the Pilgrims Event App permission to use your location within your phone settings.**

 what3words



The **What3words** app (**iOS** and **Android**) is an easy way to identify precise locations. Every 3m square has been given a unique combination of three words: a what3words address. Essential for telling our event medics or recovery vehicles your location if you need their assistance.

*Did you know?*

Since 2018, the Pilgrims Way Challenge has raised over **£950,000** for Pilgrims Hospices, funding **38,000** hours of specialist nursing care

# Getting ready

Keep the sun off your neck with the official Pilgrims Hospices neck buff. Available at [www.pilgrimswaychallenge.org](http://www.pilgrimswaychallenge.org)



## Training for the Pilgrims Way Challenge

It is recommended that you are able to walk at least 75% of the route distance comfortably beforehand. This will ensure you have an enjoyable experience at the Pilgrims Way Challenge without feeling overwhelmed by your chosen distance. A comprehensive training plan is available on the Pilgrims Hospices website.

## Essential items to bring

You'll find a full list of recommended equipment and clothing in our **Pilgrims Way Challenge Kit List**, but you should carry some **emergency money, form of ID, charged mobile phone** and a **basic first aid kit containing blister plasters**.

**Head torches are highly recommended** for those whose anticipated finish time is likely to be after 19:00. Additionally you should have a red rear light to wear on your back during the later stages of the event. You may be walking well into the evening and you need to be seen!

We recommend that you bring with you a full **water bottle** (or two) and any **preferred snacks**. A full list of the catering available at each rest stop can be found in the 'Refreshments' section later in this document.

When arriving at all event venues and rest stops, please be vigilant. Do not leave your belongings unattended. The Hospice, and other rest stops are not liable for the theft of your belongings. This also applies if you stop at any location on the route.

## Participant packs

A participant pack has been posted to every participant who registered before 26th May 2026. Included within the pack is a **unique participant lanyard, technical t-shirt** (in requested size), **sponsorship form, arrival information** and any neck buff if they were purchased with entry. This means that you can arrive at the start venue ready to go. **Please note** that your participant lanyard contains a space to write any important medical information, the participant hotline and medical number and a QR code to the route maps.

## Weather

The event will take place regardless of weather conditions, so please prepare by bringing sunscreen or waterproof clothing, as appropriate. The event will only be cancelled in extreme adverse weather conditions and the weather forecast will be monitored in the lead up to the event.

## No dogs at the Pilgrims Way Challenge

While dogs make for great training companions, they are not permitted to accompany participants on the Pilgrims Way Challenge. We cannot cater for them along the route and it can be difficult to manage on the narrow sections of the trail amongst other hikers, and other animals such as cows and sheep, and additionally where the trail follows the road.



# Safety advice



All participants in the Pilgrims Way Challenge agree to following all safety advice issued by the organisers.

- Participants must follow the instructions provided by the Pilgrims Way Challenge organisers and marshals at all times.
- All participants must obey the Country Code and Highway Codes. It's important to remember other road users while navigating sections of the Pilgrims Way Challenge that cross or follow roads. With marshals positioned at various locations, any participants seen not adhering to the Highway Code may be banned from future events.
- Walk considerately and safely. If there is no footpath walk on the road but only when it's safe to do so. Walk in single file while on road sections. Do let cars pass.
- Take extra care on sections of the Pilgrims Way that cross or follow the road. The roads **will not** closed to other traffic.
- Organisers are not responsible for the general health of participants. If you have any concerns about health or fitness to complete this challenge please consult your GP before taking part.
- **All participants should fill in the medical details** section on the reverse of their lanyard if they have any health conditions event medics should be aware of in an emergency.
- All participants **MUST** be over the age of 16 to participate in the Pilgrims Way Challenge.
- Please bring your own personal first aid kit that includes blister plasters. You should also bring a spare pair of walking socks in case your first pair become wet; wet socks lead to blisters!
- All participants should carry a form of ID on their person at all times during the event, in case needed in a medical emergency.
- You must carry a **charged mobile phone** at all times and provide the number to the organisers in advance of the event. This is in addition to the emergency contact number that you have already provided us with when registering.
- **All participants must understand that this challenge is not a race or trial of speed.** It is a personal challenge for each individual and no record of times will be kept on the day. Should you become tired, please stop and take a rest before continuing with the event.
- Should you wish to track your times, we encourage you to do so with the free Pilgrims Hospices Event App or other fitness app on mobiles phones, or regular hikers may have Garmin or other GPX devices.
- When passing through King's Wood, please be mindful of adders, ants and ticks in the longer grass. The woodland is also used by people riding horses, using mountain bikes and forest rangers driving vehicles along the wider stretches of trail. If you need medical attention upon exiting the woodland please speak to a member of our team or call the medical hotline.



# Travelling to the event

We highly recommend that you are dropped off close to the start and picked up by family or friends who can take you home after such a tiring challenge.



## Public transport

There are good public transport links to get to and/or from the event. You may find the following transport information useful.

**Dover:** Serviced by trains running approx. every 30 mins - 1 hr into Dover Priory Station from the directions of both Ashford and Canterbury. The start venue is 20-minute walk from the station.

**Canterbury:** Serviced by trains running approx. every 30 mins into Canterbury West Station from the directions of Ashford, and Thanet. The start venue is 15-minute walk from the station. Trains run from Canterbury East Station back to Dover departing every hour.

**Wye:** Serviced by trains running approx. every hour in the directions of Canterbury and Dover (via Ashford); the station is a 10-minute walk from the finish venue at St Gregory & St Martin's Church, Wye and the last night of the night is 23:07 toward Canterbury, and 23:22 toward Dover (via Ashford).

## 35km and 55km start

Location: **Connaught Park, Connaught St, Dover, CT16 1HB**

Please enter the park from Connaught Road, and you can type in 'rapid.device.torch' into what3words for an exact pin-point of the start area. No participant parking will be available at the venue itself. However, a dedicated drop-off zone will be available on Connaught Road (CT16 1HB) which will be signed and marshalled. Dover town centre has ample parking available. However, we recommend that you are dropped off before commencing your challenge.

## 25km start and 35km finish

Location: **Ann Robertson Centre, 55 London Road, Canterbury, CT2 8JA**

There will be no on-site parking available at this venue as this is reserved for patient visitors and hospice staff only. Canterbury city centre has plenty of parking available and it is a 15-20 minute walk into the city centre from the venue. Local street parking can also be found nearby. Please park legally and respectfully.

## 25km and 55km finish

Location: **St Gregory & St Martin's Church, High St, Wye, TN25 5EJ**

There will be no parking on site at the finish venue, the entire site will be used for the safe arrival of hikers who are finishing. However, a dedicated collection zone will be available in Churchfield Way (TN25 5EQ), which will be signed. Local street parking can also be found within the village. Please park legally and respectfully.

It is requested that participants liaise with their pick up driver when they are approaching the finish so that their arrivals coincide as best as possible.



# Upon arrival



## Start waves

In order to avoid congestion at the start venues and early parts of the trail, you will be allocated a specific 30-minute **start wave** based on your intended route distance, expected pace and team. Your starting wave will be communicated to you within your participant pack and via email in the days prior to the Pilgrims Way Challenge. Please plan your arrival within your allocated starting wave as this allows us to run a safe and enjoyable event.

The 35km and 55km start area in Connaught Park will open at 7:30am for registration. The 25km start area in Canterbury will open at 09:45am for registration. **Please do not arrive before these times or before your allocated start wave.** Please wear your unique participant lanyard visibly when arriving at the event. Your lanyard enables you to access the event venues and catering services.

### 55km route hikers (Connaught Park)

**Start wave A:** check in between **07:30 - 07:45hrs**

**Start wave B:** check in between **07:45 - 08:00hrs**

### 35m route hikers (Connaught Park)

**Start wave C:** check in between **08:00 - 08:15hrs**

**Start wave D:** check in between **08:15 - 08:30hrs**

### 25km route hikers (Canterbury)

**Start wave E:** check in between **10:00 - 10:30hrs**

**Start wave F:** check in between **10:30 - 11:00hrs**

## Check-in and check-out process

Only registered participants will be permitted into the site during the morning starting period (no spectators or non-participants please). Head to the registration desks to check-in when the next desk becomes available.

Once checked in, proceed directly to the start line area to begin the hike after a short briefing. Then, please leave carefully and allow space for others arriving. Please do not be tempted to simply wait for other participants as this will cause congestion and delay other hikers being started. Those starting in groups will be required to queue up in group order.

**55km participants:** please note that, if you are planning on completing the 55km route, you will need to **reach the Canterbury point by 16:15hrs and leave by 16:45hrs** at the latest in order to continue. If you arrive at Canterbury after this time, you will be advised to finish as a 35km walker. This is to avoid participants walking into the dark and our wonderful volunteers and event team working really late into the night.

**Hike completion and latest finish time:** All 35km participants must check-out and collect their medal at the Canterbury finish area by **18:30hrs** All 35km and 55km participants must do the same at the Wye finish area by **22:15hrs** If you do not think you can complete your chosen distance within the specified time, you should inform event organisers immediately on the participant hotline 07710 854029.

Due to limited access we ask that spectators do not attend the rest stops along the route. However, they are welcome to meet you at the finish venue, providing they follow the parking instructions set out on the previous page.

# Routes



The links to all routes can be found on the Pilgrims Way Challenge event page: [www.pilgrimswaychallenge.org](http://www.pilgrimswaychallenge.org)

**CANTERBURY to WYE – 25km (View map):** From the historic city of Canterbury, your trail leads west through a nature reserve, and extensive orchards towards the rather intriguingly named Old Wives Lees. Then, descend to cross the valley to the pretty hilltop village of Chilham, with its ancient, timber-framed houses. From here, the next few miles are dominated by King's Wood, where pilgrims banded together as protection against robbers. Finally, you'll descend into rolling farmland, leading to the finish in the picturesque village of Wye.

**DOVER to CANTERBURY – 35km (View map):** Beginning in Connaught Park, set beneath the imposing walls of Dover Castle, your path will follow an old Roman road that ran between Dover and Richborough, before passing the grand Waldershare House and its impressive mews. The route then leads through rolling fields to Womenswold, before passing the farming village of Patixbourne. Finally, you'll catch a glimpse of Canterbury's magnificent cathedral as you push on into the city's cobbled streets towards the finish line.

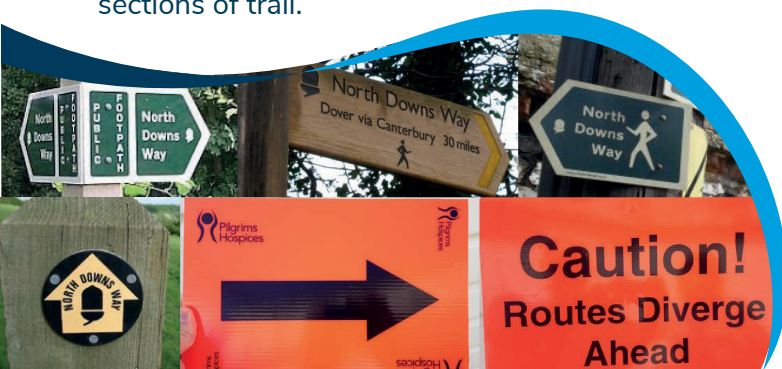
**DOVER to WYE – 55km (View map):** The ultimate test of endurance and you'll enjoy both sections of the Pilgrims Way described above in one day! After leaving Dover in the morning and experiencing all the natural beauty east Kent has to offer throughout the day, arriving at the charming village of Wye, your final destination, will be a welcome sight.

## Please note:

If you are signed up to the 55km route, but decide on the day that you wish to finish at Canterbury as a 35km finisher, simply inform the staff on the de-registration desk at the Canterbury rest stop and they will issue you with a medal.

## Route information - 3 ways to find your way

- 1) We strongly recommend downloading the free **Pilgrims Hospices Event App** for iOS and Android devices as you can view detailed route maps that show your current position so you can see if you deviate from the correct route.
  - 2) Your lanyard contains a QR code which will take you to maps of each section of the route.
  - 3) The routes will be clearly signed with acorn national trail signage arrows, supplemented by orange fluorescent signs with black arrows marked with the Pilgrims Hospices logo. Orange ribbon is also used as reassurance on longer sections of trail.
- **All hikers must sign out at the de-registration desks once they have completed the route.** We need to account for all participants at the end of the event and will call you if you have not checked out or haven't called to let us know that you have finished early or elsewhere.
  - If you are unable to complete your route, you **MUST** inform the organisers so that you are accounted for – please call or message the participant hotline **07710 854029 stating your name and participant number.**
  - If there is a **medical emergency, you must call 999** and seek the help of the emergency services who are aware that the event is taking place. You should also call the **Event Medical Emergency Number (07537 152310)** so that event medics can be mobilised, as often they can arrive on scene faster than an ambulance.



# Rest stops



Rest stops for each route are as follows:

**55km route** visits rest stops **1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8.**

**35km route** visits rest stops **1, 2, 3, 4, 5.**

**25km route** visits rest stops **5, 6, 7, 8.**

- **35km and 55km start venue:** Connaught Park  
**Refreshments available:** water, flapjacks.
- **Rest stop 1:** All Saints Church, Waldershare, CT15 5AT (at 9.5km into 55km and 35km route).  
**Refreshments available:** water, tea, coffee, squash, crisps and a selection of cakes including vegan and gluten-free options.
- **Rest stop 2:** Coldred Village Green, CT15 5AH (at 14 km into 55km and 35km route).  
**Refreshments available:** water, bananas, crisps, chocolate brownies and a selection of sweets (suitable for vegans).
- **Rest stop 3:** St Margaret's of Antioch, Womenswold, CT4 6HE (at 21km into 55km and 35km route). Refreshments available: water  
**Refreshments available:** water, tea, coffee, squash, selection of rolls (ham, cheese, egg mayo and vegan/gluten free options), a selection of cakes including vegan and gluten-free options and sweets (suitable for vegans).
- **Rest stop 4:** St Mary's Church, Patricxbourne, CT4 5BS (at 27.6km into 55km and 35km route).  
**Refreshments available:** water, squash, bananas, crisps and a selection of cakes including vegan and gluten-free options.
- **Rest stop 5 / 35km finish / 25km start venue,** Anne Robertson Centre, Canterbury, CT2 8JA (at 35km into 35km and 55km route). **Refreshments available:** 35km and 55km participants are able to enjoy a hot meal from our on site caterer. Also available is water, squash, tea, coffee and bananas.
- **Rest stop 6:** Chartham Hatch, CT4 7LP (at 5.1km into 25km route 39.6km into 55km route).  
**Refreshments available:** water, squash, tea, coffee, crisps, strawberries and a selection of cakes including vegan and gluten-free options.
- **Rest stop 7:** St Mary's Church, Chilham, CT4 8BY (at 10.3km into 25km route, 44.7km into 55km route). **Refreshments available:** water, tea, coffee, squash, selection of rolls (ham, cheese, egg mayo and vegan/gluten free options), selection of cakes including vegan and gluten-free options.
- **Rest stop 8:** Kings Wood, Mountain St, Chilham, CT4 8DH (at 12.2km into 25km route, 46.6km into 55km route). **Refreshments available:** water, tea, coffee, squash, crisps, a selection of cakes including vegan and gluten-free options and sweets (suitable for vegans).
- **Reassurance stop:** Kings Wood (at 14.6km into 25km route, 49km into 55km route).  
**Refreshments available:** water, crisps, bananas, chocolate brownies and a selection of sweets (suitable for vegans).
- **35km and 55km Finish:** St Gregory and St Martin's Church, High St, Wye, TN25 5EJ. **Refreshments available:** water, squash, tea, coffee, hot chocolate and cans of fizzy drinks. Finishers are also able to enjoy a BBQ from our on site caterer.

## Rest stop information

- Participants are advised to bring any preferred snacks to supplement the catering at rest stops.
- Participants are responsible for making sure that they remain hydrated. **It's recommend to bring two full water bottles.** Water stations will be available to refill at rest stops.
- Portable toilets will be available at each rest stop (excluding the reassurance stop in Kings Wood).
- Participants are encouraged to spend as little time as necessary at each rest stop and ideally 15 minutes maximum to enable you to complete your preferred route distance.

# Junctions of note

Please take note of the following sections of the route to avoid becoming lost or injured.

**Routes affected: 35km and 55km**

**Location: Farm before Waldershare and Ashley**

You may encounter some fields with livestock, including cows. If so, follow the simple advice below. Please note we have informed the farmers of our arrival.

- Move quickly and quietly, and if possible walk around the herd.
- Avoid getting between cows and their calves.
- Don't panic or run – most cattle will stop before they reach you; if they follow, just walk on quietly.
- Remember to close gates behind you when moving through fields containing livestock.



**Routes affected: 35km and 55km**

**Location: Eythorne Road, Sheperdswell**

As participants leave the village of Sheperdswell (17km into the 35km route and 55km route), the route crosses a railway line on Eythorne Road. Participants should immediately cross to then rejoin the North Downs Way, and please be **extra vigilant when crossing and walking on roads.**

**Routes affected: 35km and 55km**

**Location: Patrixbourne**

At 27.3km, participants reach Patrixbourne where the route joins the road for a short section. **Take care and be cautious when crossing the road and walk in single file** past a small roundabout and through the village to reach the next rest stop.



**Routes affected: 35km and 55km**

**Location: Adisham Road, after leaving Womenswold**

After leaving the rest stop at Womenswold, you will soon reach Adisham Road. Please be wary as this is a fast road, so you must exercise extra caution when approaching, and whilst crossing the road.

# Junctions of note continued

Please take note of the following sections of the route to avoid becoming lost or injured.

**Routes affected: 25km and 55km**  
**Location: Crossing of Rheims Way, Canterbury**

As participants leave Canterbury, they must cross the A2050 Rheims Way. There is good visibility but it is a wide road so participants must ensure they give themselves enough time to safely cross between traffic.



**Routes affected: 25km and 35km**  
**Location: Howfield Lane, Chartham Hatch**

As you are approaching the North Downs Way from Howfield Lane, please be wary as you will be walking on country-roads for a short period. Please walk in single-file, and stick to the pavements when possible.

**Routes affected: 25km and 55km**  
**Location: Approaching Old Wives Lees / Long Hill / Crossing of A252**

As you approach Old Wives Lees you are walking on a quiet country road for a period as you approach Long Hill. Please be aware that Long Hill is a "long hill" and as you head downwards **please walk safely and in single-file**, as there is no pavement. Please be cautious as you approach the A252 road crossing, which is a fast road. There is good visibility in both directions and you are able to see oncoming traffic in each direction.



**Routes affected: 25km and 55km**  
**Location: Crossing of A28 near Perry Court Farm, Wye**

1.9km from the finish, participants must cross the A28. This is a fast road but has good visibility in both directions. Make sure that you are personally satisfied it is safe before crossing, and **do not just cross because others ahead of you have crossed**. Event marshals will be present to remind you to cross safely.

**Routes affected: 25km and 55km**  
**Location: Bridge Street railway crossing, Wye**

Just 600m from the finish, participants cross the railway line at Wye. Please be extra vigilant while crossing as traffic comes from multiple directions. Do not presume that because participants ahead of you cross that it is safe for you to follow. If the level crossing is down, you can go over the pedestrian bridge between the platforms.



# After the event



## The finish line

Everyone will receive a well-deserved medal upon completing the Pilgrims Way Challenge. Please ensure that you visit the de-registration desks to claim yours. It is recommended that you arrange to be picked up after such a tiring challenge.

Photos from the day will be available online in the days after your Challenge, and the link to the gallery will be communicated to you via email. Please note that our volunteer photographers will only be taking a few photographs to capture a snapshot of the day, and that we are unable to photograph every participant.

## When you are home

If you've taken pictures or video footage to remember the day, why not add them to the **Pilgrims Hospices Walking and Hiking Facebook Group**, on **Instagram** or tweet us at **@pilgrimshospice**.

Please do take a few minutes to complete the **online survey** afterwards that we will email to you in the days subsequent of the challenge. We value your feedback and will use your comments to improve the event, and others, for future years.

## Looking for your next challenge?

### Looking for your next challenge?

### Why not lace up your running shoes and take on the Pilgrims Hospices Miner's Way Challenge 2027!

Inspired by East Kent's proud mining heritage, this exciting running event will take participants on an unforgettable journey through the historic Miners Way Trail and the beautiful landscapes surrounding Betteshanger Country Park. Whether you choose the multi-terrain half marathon, the 10km circuit, or the family-friendly 3km trail, every step you take will help support local hospice care across east Kent.

From the former mining communities of Aylesham to the iconic surroundings of Betteshanger, you'll experience a route rich in history, community spirit, and breathtaking scenery. Along the way, you'll discover the legacy of the miners who helped shape our region, while being part of a truly special challenge that brings people together for an incredible cause.

Supported by our dedicated Pilgrims Hospices event team, friendly marshals, and volunteers, you'll have encouragement every step of the way. With a welcoming event village, refreshments, and a fantastic atmosphere at the finish line, the Miners Way Challenge promises to be an unforgettable day for runners, walkers, friends, and families alike.



# Hiking for hospice care



## Raising sponsorship

We need every Pilgrims Way challenger to show their support by pledging to raise as much sponsorship as they can through their challenge. After all, it's no mean feat to walk all that way!

In 2025 the Pilgrims Way Challenge raised over an incredible **£198,000** for Pilgrims Hospices!

By raising sponsorship, every mile you march will be making a real difference. **If every person could raise just £150 in sponsorship, together we could raise over £100,000 for hospice care!**

Here are some top tips to help you maximise your fundraising efforts:

- You can start an **online sponsorship page** which is a great way to share your fundraising efforts by social media and email. Your supporters can donate easily and the money comes directly to Pilgrims Hospices, meaning it's hassle-free for you too!
- Personalise your page with a story, target, photos and training updates to reflect your personality, what you are doing and why you're supporting Pilgrims Hospices.
- Shout about it – You're doing a wonderful thing! You're taking on a huge personal challenge and helping to support the care of thousands of local people while you do it! Be proud. Be enthusiastic – it's contagious!
- Help your sponsors see how their contribution makes a difference by relating their donation amount to something tangible. Here are a few examples of things your fundraising can will go towards. **£12** could pay for a patient's meals for a day, **£25** could pay for an hour of nursing care, **£35** could pay for therapy sessions for patients and carers, while **£50** could pay for essential nursing supplies.
- Encourage your friends and family to tick the Gift Aid checkbox when they sponsor you. This makes their donation worth 25% more to us at no extra cost to them.
- Did you know that about 20% of sponsorship is given after an event? Remember to do one last ask around just after you've completed your challenge. You might be surprised by a few late donations!
- Some people may prefer to sponsor you via a traditional **paper sponsorship form**, which you can download and print from the Pilgrims Hospices website. Please send a cheque for your final sponsorship total, along with your sponsorship form to: **Supporter Relations, Pilgrims Hospice, 56 London Road, Canterbury, Kent CT2 8JA** or **donate your collected sponsorship online** via the Pilgrims Hospices website if it's easier for you. If sending a cheque, please make them payable to Pilgrims Hospices in East Kent. Please try to have your sponsorship money to us by August 2026.

*We hope you have a great day and thank you so much for supporting Pilgrims Hospices!*