

For updates from 'The Mother of All Challenges for Sport Relief', follow @SportRelief, and tune into The One Show every night from 12th March, 7pm on BBC One



PRESS RELEASE: Sunday 11th March 2018

ALEX JONES AND FOUR AMAZING MUMS DIVE INTO MOTHER'S DAY WITH THE MOTHER OF ALL CHALLENGES FOR SPORT RELIEF

TV presenter Alex Jones joins forces with four inspirational mums to kick off a gruelling set of five challenges across the country for Sport Relief

TV presenter Alex Jones today joined four amazing mums to embark on the epic ***Mother of All Challenges for Sport Relief***. This test of a lifetime will see the five mums push themselves to the limit as they face a series of five punishing challenges across six days - including swimming in Loch Ness, cycling through the Lake District and caving in Wales.

Today the mums began their battle with the bone chilling waters of Scotland's most famous lake, Loch Ness. With a frightening depth of 240 metres, the team will plunge into a relay swim across a section of the 23 miles long loch. Apart from the small matter of Nessie purportedly lurking deep beneath the surface, the water is painfully freezing with an average temperature of just four degrees Celsius in March. In these frigid temperatures, the mums will need to dig deep with the risk of hypothermia always on their mind.

Speaking this morning ahead of the swim, Alex said:

"I'm pretty petrified about this - swimming is not my strong suit at all and that coupled with the cold makes this my idea of hell. Having the other mums here makes it all the more palatable - it's a real team effort and there's a good team spirit which makes it feel far less isolating. If I had to spend Mother's Day with anyone apart from my son Ted, it would have to be these girls, doing this challenge."

Joining the mums on their feat is world-renowned sports scientist and physical activity expert, Professor Greg Whyte OBE. Commenting on the conditions they're up against, he said:

"This is brutal - the water temperature is 4.2 degrees centigrade and although the snow has gone, snow melt has come down and filled up Loch Ness with cold water, there's a breeze blowing which makes it choppy and difficult to swim, and it's March! It doesn't get much tougher than this, and for five mums who have never done open water swimming before, this is a baptism of fire!"

To find out how the mums got on, and to watch the swimming in action, tune in to The One Show tomorrow night (12th March) at 7pm on BBC One.

The four mums are:

- **Amal Hassan**, 31, a mum of one from London. Amal is a trained doctor specialising in Sports Medicine.
- **Debbie Williams**, 50, a mum of four from Bristol. Debbie is a support worker for adults with learning difficulties.
- **Jodi Dowse**, 28, a mum of two from Bristol. Jodi works at BlueBell, a charity providing emotional wellbeing services to families during pregnancy and after birth.
- **Leigh McLean**, 44, a mum of three from Glasgow. Leigh works for a construction company.

What's coming up for the mums?

- Starting at Loch Ness on Sunday 11th March – Mother's Day – the team will brave the freezing cold as they swim a section of Scotland's most famous loch.
- Day two on 12th March will see the team lace up their hiking boots as they try to conquer Helvellyn via Swirral Edge in the Lake District.
- On Tuesday 13th March, the team will test their endurance; cycling up three of the Lake District's toughest passes: the Kirkstone Pass, Hornister Pass and Newslands Pass.
- Our mums will next travel to Alex's home country of Wales. On 15th March, they will head deep underground, crawl their way through tight passages and a maze of dark caverns to make it out of Porth Yr Ogof cave in the Brecon Beacons.
- Friday 16th March will culminate in a marathon finish. Our fearless mums will tackle a relay coastal run across the hilly Welsh coast. The test will finally end with a triumphant crossing over the finish line in Swansea.

Our intrepid team of mums want the public to support their efforts with donations to help vulnerable people in the UK and across the world live happier, healthier and safer lives as well as raise awareness of maternal health issues. Maternal health is one of the causes funded by Sport Relief money and something close to the group's hearts as each of the four mums have experienced their own maternal health issues.

You can sponsor the team at [SportRelief.com/mums](https://www.sportrelief.com/mums).

For the first time ever Sport Relief 2018 is asking the entire nation to take on a huge collective challenge – beating a billion steps a day, every day, from 17th-23rd March. For more information on how to get involved with this year's Sport Relief campaign, download the Sport Relief App or go to [sportrelief.com](https://www.sportrelief.com).

-Ends-

For media enquiries contact:

Harsha Sharma

07738735562 / H.Sharma@comicrelief.com

Sophie Moran

020 7820 2534 / S.Moran@comicrelief.com

For image enquiries contact:

Lucille Flood

0795899168 / l.flood@comicrelief.com

Photography team

Photography@comicrelief.com

NOTES TO EDITORS:

Sport Relief brings the nation together to get active, raise money and change lives. Since 2002, Sport Relief has raised over £335 million. The money raised by the public will be spent by Comic Relief to tackle the critical issues affecting people across the UK and the world. This year, Sport Relief culminates in a week of activity from Saturday 17th to Friday 23rd March, leading to an unmissable night of TV on the BBC.

Comic Relief is a UK charity which aims to create a just world, free from poverty - where everyone is safe, healthy, educated and empowered. Since 1985, Comic Relief has raised over £1 billion. That money has helped, and is helping, people both at home in the UK and across the world. For information about Comic Relief and the work it carries out, please visit www.comicrelief.com
Comic Relief, registered charity 326568 (England/Wales); SC039730 (Scotland)