

Dad-of-two set for grueling charity challenges, raising money for the Childhood Eye Cancer Trust

Resident and optical expert is fundraising for child cancer charity

County Durham resident, Tim Inness, is digging deep for two bucket-list challenges in a bid to raise vital funds for the Childhood Eye Cancer Trust (CHECT) as World Retinoblastoma Awareness Week 2019 (12th-18th May) is in full swing.



Tim Inness training for his charity challenges, raising money for the Childhood Eye Cancer Trust.

Tim, aged 33, is set to take on the Yorkshire Three Peak challenge on the 25th May, which he aims to complete in under 12 hours. The mission will see him cover 26 miles across Wherside, Ingleborough and Pen-y-ghent, whilst carrying a 15kg rucksack.

And if that wasn't enough, Tim will then take on the "main event" – a grueling 24km march over Pen y Fan, the highest mountain in the Brecon Beacons – to raise funds for CHECT. Taking place on 29th June, the walk is known as the 'Fan Dance' and is used for SAS selection. The challenge is infamous for not only being a test of physical ability but also mental strength, which Tim is aiming to complete in under six hours.

As a store manager for Vision Express in Stockton-on-Tees, Tim has seen the work of CHECT through the optical retailer's charity partnership. CHECT is a charity dedicated to helping people affected by retinoblastoma, a rare form of eye cancer usually found in babies and children under six. Tim said: "I didn't know about CHECT before I started working at Vision Express. The partnership is so important because the two organisations working together helps to raise more awareness. Also, it is vital as CHECT isn't government funded and relies on donations."

Gearing up for the fundraising feats, Tim said: “I have two daughters, aged three and seven months, and working for Vision Express for the last eight years has highlighted what CHECT can provide, not just for the child but the whole family. It is comforting to know that if Rb did affect either of my girls, CHECT is there to help and support.”

With training underway and going well, Tim said: “I chose the Fan Dance to really push my limits and test myself. There’s a part of the march called 'Jacob’s Ladder', which is the final climb before heading down to the finish. You arrive there around 13 miles in and you have to climb 2,000 steps. It’s the final push and a true mental test, so I hope all the training that has been done prior kicks in.”



Vision Express Stockton-on-Tees store manager, Tim Inness, training for charity challenges.

CHECT Chief Executive, Patrick Tonks said: “We are so grateful for the work Vision Express has done to raise awareness and invaluable funds for the charity throughout our eight-year partnership and a massive thank you to Tim for going out of his way to fundraise for us. We really wouldn’t be able to help so many children and families without the support of people like Tim.

“Retinoblastoma currently has a 98% survival rate; however, the treatment process can be very challenging – about half of the children have an eye removed to stop the cancer from spreading, which has long term implications for them and their families.

“Retinoblastoma can be very difficult to detect because children often seem perfectly well, and many parents and healthcare professionals have never heard of it. This week is World Retinoblastoma Awareness Week and we are urging all parents to be aware of the symptoms – a glow in the eye and a squint being the most reported – and to have their child checked out if they have any concerns at all.”

To support Tim’s fundraising, visit: <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/timothy-inness1>

To find out more about CHECT, visit: <https://chect.org.uk/>

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Notes for editors

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About Vision Express

Vision Express is one of the largest optical retailers in the UK and part of [GrandVision](#), the global leader in optical retail operating in more than 40 countries, spanning over 6,500 stores and online.

With almost 600 stores nationwide, Vision Express first opened its doors in Newcastle in 1988. Built on a passion for the profession, it has gone from strength to strength, driven by a commitment to unparalleled customer service and providing the best individual optical care, the right product and great value. Customers can select from a vast range of genuine designer brands and the latest technology lenses, through to complete glasses from £39.

With around 6,000 employees, Vision Express makes a significant difference to the communities it operates within, and the organisations it chooses to support. As part of its commitment to [Vision. Taken Seriously](#), and as a responsible and caring retailer, Vision Express is proud to partner with healthcare charities, which have touched the lives of customers and teams. These companies provide vital support to people affected by vision-related conditions. They are part of the [Vision Express Charity Project](#) and include:

1. Childhood Eye Cancer Trust (CHECT)
2. Macular Society

About the Childhood Eye Cancer Trust

1. The Childhood Eye Cancer Trust (CHECT) is a UK charity dedicated to helping people affected by retinoblastoma. It:
 - Provides ongoing support and information to families and individuals.
 - Funds research into the prevention and treatment of retinoblastoma.
 - Raises awareness among health professionals and the public.
 - Influences policy to improve services for patients.
2. Retinoblastoma is a rare and aggressive form of eye cancer that affects babies and young children, mainly under the age of six. Around 40-50 cases are diagnosed a year in the UK – or one child a week. It represents 3% of all childhood cancers and 10% of cancers in babies under the age of one in the UK.
3. Around 98% of children survive retinoblastoma in the UK but early diagnosis is crucial in order to save a child's eyes, sight and life. The most common symptoms are a white glow in a child's eye or pupil in dim lighting or when a photo is taken using a flash, and a squint.
4. CHECT has been a registered charity since 1987 and was formerly known as the Retinoblastoma Society. For more information on CHECT or retinoblastoma (also known as Rb), including signs and symptoms, diagnosis, the red reflex test and treatment options, visit www.chect.org.uk