

**PRESS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: 19.06.23**



## **Flamboyant swimmer completes 18 month-long One Hundred Hats Swim Challenge for young carers in Surrey**

**Jule Harries undertook to complete 100 open water swims wearing a different hat each time to raise money for Surrey Young Carers (part of Action for Carers) and Alzheimer's Research UK and, 18 months later, is due to complete her challenge on Sunday June 25<sup>th</sup>, 2023.**

Jule, from Beare Green, Surrey, took up open water swimming in May 2021 and after a few months decided to take her new-found love of swimming to the next level with an eye-catching challenge!

If taking on 100 open water swims wasn't enough, she wanted to do it in a range of weird and wonderful hats.

She started her challenge way back on Remembrance Sunday 2021, donning a vintage tin helmet as her first hat. The halfway point was marked with a meter-high floral creation, complete with cherry blossom and daffodils, to celebrate May Day and to herald the start of summer last year.

Other hats have included a Carmen Miranda-style mountain-of-fruit headpiece, massive lunchbox, Ukrainian flower headdress and most recently an enormous tin of SPAM and a giant movable Rubik's cube. Jule usually ties in the choice of hat with special events or celebrations close to the day of her swim, and has created the most theatrical and flamboyant hats herself. As the challenge has progressed the hats have become more ostentatious and difficult to swim in, as Steph McGovern (CH4 *Steph's Packed Lunch*) commented "They're not just any hats, they're massive!"



## Supporting important causes

Jule's inspiring challenge is raising vital funds for two charities very close to her heart.

She said: "I was keen to help local charity, Surrey Young Carers (part of Action for Carers), as I work in a school where a number of pupils are registered as young carers. The charity provides support and advice to these youngsters and gives them opportunities to meet others in similar situations, share their experiences, and take time out from their caring role"

"I'm also supporting Alzheimer's Research UK as I have seen firsthand the devastating impact of dementia and have also worked as a research scientist, so I know how important their work is in finding a cure for this horrible disease."

## All weathers

Swimming throughout the seasons in all weathers, and in the dark, has been challenging but Jule has enjoyed the support and encouragement of her fellow swimmers and the safety team at the lake at Buckland Park.

She said: "This has been a very happy challenge, which brought a smile to people's faces, and I always felt very uplifted after completing each swim... even if I didn't feel like getting into the freezing water beforehand! That's not the only challenge though: deciding on a theme, designing and making it, and then trying to safely swim with it when it might be large, uncomfortable, unstable or all three, is part of the test... and part of the fun."

To see Jule's journey, and her latest hat, visit her on Instagram @Jule.Harries or you can see her updates and sponsor her at <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/juleharries2> **ENDS**

## FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT

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## NOTES TO EDITORS

If you would like to come along on Sunday and see Jule in her final hat, doing the final swim, we would be delighted. Please let us know. Swim takes place 9.15am, Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> June at Buckland Park Lagoon RH3 7BG.

### **About Action for Carers and its youth service, Surrey Young Carers**

Action for Carers Surrey provides events, information, advice and support for carers aged 5-95. Support includes support, drop-in Hubs across Surrey, benefits help, advocacy, guidance on moving and handling, hospital carer advisors, workshops, information and relaxation events (by Zoom and face to face), support groups, free resources and more.

The specialist service, Surrey Young Carers, is for 5–17-year-olds, offering drop-ins, information and activities to give them a little time out from caring, and supporting them to reach their potential.

**Carers should call the Helpline on 0303 040 1234; text (only) 07723 486730 or email [CarerSupport@actionforcarers.org.uk](mailto:CarerSupport@actionforcarers.org.uk).**

### **About Alzheimer's Research UK**

Alzheimer's Research UK is the UK's leading charity specialising in finding preventions, treatments and a cure for dementia. The charity is currently supporting pioneering dementia research projects worth nearly £34 million in leading Universities across the UK.

**For the latest updates follow Alzheimer's Research UK on Twitter [@AlzResearchUK](https://twitter.com/AlzResearchUK)**