



27 May 2009

Press Release

Local man to swim the channel for Surrey ASBAH

Local man Andy Butler is currently training to swim the English Channel.

Andy, 41 from Godalming, decided to take on this rare challenge whilst enjoying a leisurely swim at his local baths last year. What first appeared to be a crazy idea quickly turned into a reality as Andy began to seriously consider swimming the 21 miles from Dover to Calais to raise money for the Surrey Association of Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus (Surrey ASBAH).

Andy chose to dedicate his Channel swim to Surrey ASBAH, in memory of his brother Michael who was affected by spina bifida. Andy said, "Michael lived life with joy and happiness no matter what physical difficulties he had to overcome. I hope people see that what I am trying to do is quite a challenge, but that every day people with spina bifida and hydrocephalus have greater challenges to overcome and they do this without reservation." Andy added, "Apparently more people have attempted to climb Mount Everest than have attempted to swim the Channel!"

Andy is now swimming between 150-200 lengths Monday to Friday at Nuffield Leisure Centre, in Hayes Lane, Bromley, close to Andy's business, Wave Home Automation. Daily training also involves starting each day with sit-ups and press-ups as well as going on weekly 3-5 mile runs and 12-15 mile cross country bike rides in order to increase his strength and stamina. In preparation for the swim against strong tides, Andy has recently started to swim at Dover Harbour each Saturday and Sunday with the Channel Federation.

Andy is hoping to raise an incredible £10,000. To offer your encouragement and support, visit www.justgiving.com/andrewbutler3 to make a donation. To keep up to date with how Andy's training is going and how he is coping as the swim date looms visit his blog at <http://manfromatlantis.wordpress.com>.

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Notes to editors:

Andy is available for interview and very interested in providing regular updates on his training and progress as he prepares for the Channel swim between 13 and 20 July. The date of Andy's Channel swim is dependent on tides and weather that week.

A photograph of Andy is attached.

Spina bifida occurs early in pregnancy and causes damage to the spinal cord and nerves which may result in paralysis below the level of the fault. Many people with spina bifida also have hydrocephalus, caused by a build up of fluid in the ventricles of the brain. As well as occurring in association with spina bifida, hydrocephalus can also occur in premature babies or at any time in life after meningitis, a head injury, or a stroke.

<http://www.surreyasbah.org.uk/>

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