

## Cyclists' 200-mile charity ride for Callum

# STEPPING UP TO THE CHALLENGE

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**A SPORTING mum is today leading a 200-mile challenge of a lifetime to help a young boy take his first proper steps.**

Cerebral palsy sufferer Callum Brown is desperate to fly to the St Louis Children's Hospital in Missouri, in the United States, where surgeons can correct problems with his legs and finally help him walk properly.

His parents Neil and Sharon, of Seaton Sluice, Northumberland, set up a fund called Callum's Wish To Walk, with an original target of £50,000 to pay for the pioneering treatment.

But they now estimate they'll need at least £70,000 to take into account all the post-op physiotherapy.

After hearing of his plight, GB athlete Joanna Reed was inspired to help Callum reach that fundraising goal by organising the cycle ride of her life from Edinburgh to Newcastle which she has dubbed Reason To Ride – and she has enlisted a team of riders to join her.

Each of them has been asked to raise a minimum of £1,000 to help boost Callum's appeal.

And at 4am this morning, the 37-year-old mum-of-three, of Gosforth, Newcastle, set off

from the Scottish capital with 16 other keen riders – including Newcastle United defender Robbie Elliott – on a 15-hour journey down to the finish line at the David Lloyd gym in Newcastle.

As she set off, Joanna, a sports coach who is part of the GB triathlon team, said: "I am really lucky to be able to do the things I can do and I thought if I can use my legs to help a little boy use his, then I will.

"I knew I would have to do something quite extreme, which is where the 200 miles in one day came from.

"I think it will be a real test for the riders, physically and mentally, to just keep going."

As well as the Reason To Ride event today, runners Matt Atkinson, 41, and Phil Smith, 36, are going 84 miles along Hadrian's Wall – and they are due to arrive at the David Lloyd gym at the same time as the cyclists.

Callum's Wish To Walk total now stands at £49,000, but it should soar past that when the cyclists' and runners' sponsorship comes in.

Mum Sharon said: "We are delighted that so many people are getting behind the cause and helping Callum.

"The Reason To Ride will really help put our target within reaching distance.

"We are so grateful to everyone taking part, and to Jo who has gone hell for leather organising the ride."



TRIP FUNDRAISER: Left, Callum and his mum Sharon, and, above, Callum and cyclist Joanna Reed