

Step up for a Paw-Some Cause – Support Air Ambulance Charity Kent Surrey Sussex (KSS)

Air Ambulance Charity Kent Surrey Sussex (KSS) is inviting dog lovers to take part in *Hound Hike 100* to help raise vital funds for the life-saving charity.

The event encourages participants to walk a total of 100 kilometres or 100 miles with their canine companions during the 31 days of May. Participants can walk at their own pace, in their own time, on days and times to suit them, and at locations of their choice.

Nick Turrell, Community Fundraising Manager, KSS said: *“Hound Hike 100 is a wonderful way to give your dog walks a purpose this May. Each year, KSS needs to raise £16.6m – the equivalent of £45k per day – to operate our life-saving service. With 87% of our income raised through the generosity of our supporters, we rely on members of our local communities fundraising on our behalf.*

“Hound Hike 100, which returns for its third year, is a really popular fundraiser – a great way for people to enjoy the fresh air and explore their local surroundings with their furry friends. This year, we’re hoping that Hound Hike 100 will raise over £20,000. To thank everyone for taking part, all participants will receive a free bandana for their four-legged friends to wear when completing their challenge – and the first 50 dog owners who raise over £150 will be sent a free T-shirt!”.

KSS is a charity which responds to an average of eight urgent calls for help each day, giving patients the best chance of

survival and helping to keep families together. By taking part in *Hound Hike 100*, participants will help KSS to provide critical care whenever and wherever it is needed – whether at home, by the roadside, at a remote location or even when out on a dog walk.

Emma Collins from Sussex said: *“I was out walking my dog and a friend’s dog when I slipped and heard the crack of my bones breaking. Within 15-20 minutes we heard the helicopter from KSS above us. I don’t think I’ve ever been so happy to see a helicopter in my life!”*.

Every Pound Counts

Nick Turrell continued: *“Every pound raised by taking part in KSS’s Hound Hike 100 makes a real difference, helping to ensure we can be there for people like Emma in their hour of need. The team at KSS will be here to support you every step of the way – including providing tips and information for safe walking during Hound Hike 100. You can also join our Facebook community group to see updates, interact with fellow walkers and share photos of your walks to help inspire others. It’s easy and fun to take part – and we always get great feedback from dog owners about how much they have enjoyed this challenge.”*

Erica Curtis from Dorking in Surrey took part in last year’s Hound Hike 100 with her dog, Gertrude. She said: *“I absolutely love doing the Hound Hike 100. We walked in new places, saw some amazing sights all whilst raising pounds and even losing a few pounds – win, win!”*

Adrian Clark from Hythe in Kent completed the challenge with his dog, Teddy. He added, *“I really enjoyed taking part in Hound Hike 100 in 2022. It was a lovely challenge and great for me (and Teddy) to be able to support such a great cause.”*

To sign up for *Hound Hike 100*, please visit www.aakss.org.uk/houndhike100. For further information about

Air Ambulance Charity Kent Surrey Sussex: www.aakss.org.uk/.