

news

stourbridgenews.co.uk

# Steve's efforts bag £1.8k



GOOD causes helping people around the borough have been given an £1,800 boost by an adventurous Dudley councillor whose latest charity challenge pushed him to his limit.

Councillor Steve Waltho has completed all manner of gruelling walks, climbs and cycle rides to help pull in the pounds for organisations close to his heart over the years.

But bad weather scuppered his latest fundraising feat when he was just halfway through an attempt to scale seven remote Scottish peaks in 24 hours with teenage accomplice Sam Joy.

Despite being forced to abandon the 4,000-foot challenge 56-year-old Steve, from Wordsley, and his son Joe's best friend Sam, aged 17, still managed to coin in £1,800 in charity cash donated by generous friends, family and colleagues.

The money will benefit the West Midlands Lupus, Dudley's Action Heart charity, Leukaemia Care and the Georgina unit at Russells Hall Hospital (one of the mayor of Dudley's charities).

Representatives from the charities were presented with cheques for £450 each at a presentation at the latest monthly Lupus drop-in clinic at Russells Hall Hospital, Dudley.

Cllr Waltho, a shift team leader at Rhodia in Oldbury, said: "Sponsors have been fantastic

and I'd like to thank colleagues on the council and at work as well as family friends for their generosity.

"Special thanks go to my works manager John Hamnett and our own borough legend Geoff Hill MBE for substantial contributions."

Steve, a councillor for St Thomas's ward, said he was "bitterly disappointed" to have been defeated by his latest challenge.

But after completing three peaks in the Ben Nevis range, a treacherous descent in darkness and a further climb to the fourth peak Caingorm in appalling weather – the gutsy father-of-two was forced to accept "it was far too dangerous to continue".

Cllr Waltho praised his climbing partner Sam, a student at Halesowen College, "for showing maturity in very trying circumstances well beyond his years" during the trip back in August.

**LEFT: Yvonne Norton (West Midlands Lupus Group), Joy Brown (Action Heart), cllr Steve Waltho, Dr Nicola Erb (consultant), Sarah Logan (Lupus UK nurse), Sam Joy (fellow climber with Steve), Dawn Allen (Leukaemia Care), Christine Protheroe (Georgina Unit). Buy photo: 521104M.**