The Big Ben Challenge: Tim’s story

Tim Bourne is a 57-year old Business Change Manager and is taking on the Stand Up Paddle Board Big Ben Challenge in aid of Mates in Mind at Regatta London.

“I am taking on this challenge for the rare chance to paddle on a hopefully calmer Thames in the heart of London, whilst the Thames Barrier is closed, and no craft are allowed on the river other than those registered for the Regatta.

“Plus, the motivation it gives me (i.e. necessity!) to raise my paddleboard game by a BIG step up!”

“I chose Mates In Mind because it resonates with what I’ve observed and felt first-hand during a working life of over thirty years. In my various roles managing teams, providing coaching and working with areas undergoing unsettling organisational change, I have often seen the stresses that work and workplace change can place on individuals’ mental health.

There is a pressing need for Mates In Mind in the workplace. I’ve seen how some organisations are starting to recognise and address the many and complex mental health issues that may be faced by their workforce.

But these are often larger corporations with the resources and infrastructure to establish the right support. Many organisations still haven’t recognised the scale of the problem, or haven’t got the resources to understand, dispel any stigma or address mental health issues in their workforce. Mates in Mind is focused on these
organisations, with practical support that raises mental health awareness, opens discussion and promotes more positive mental wellbeing at work.

I am fundraising by sponsorship from friends and family showing support for what I fear could be one of my most over-reaching acts of folly!

I’m a fairly new, but older paddleboarder, with no related experience that might have helped, like surfing or canoeing. This 12-mile race against time limits (i.e. before the Thames Barrier is opened again) will be a daunting stretch for me, but also a clear focus for improving my skills and fitness in the run-up to it. I’ll post regular updates during the hard 12-week training period, sharing my progress – both the ups and the inevitable downs.
Encouragement in any form to keep me focused through all this will be very gratefully received – including if people want to join me when training on the water!

Well done Tim, and we are delighted to welcome you to the team! If you would like to show Tim your support, please visit his Justgiving Page.

To join Tim and the rest of the Mates in Mind Team on this challenge, sign up for your place here.