

## Fundraising advice

We asked six 2009 team leaders to pass on their advice on how their teams reached their pledges for Oxfam Trailwalker and Trailtrekker 2009. Here's what they had to say:



Ian Banks, My L&Gs are aching, £2,469  
Trailwalker 2009

*“As a team we presented to our division a short and eye-opening overview of the challenge and what this means in practice...”*

“Trailwalker 2009 was an amazing experience for everyone in our team, not just the achievement of completing the challenge as a team of four in just over 25 hours but the fundraising side too.

“We are fortunate in that our employers matched all of our personal fundraising totals and this helped us significantly to meet our total.

“As a team we presented to our division a short and eye-opening overview of the challenge and what this means in practice and this helped to really raise awareness of just how different and difficult this challenge is... something unusual really helps people dig deep to sponsor you.

“I set up a JustGiving site and made sure that this was updated regularly keeping everyone up to date on how our preparation was going... including funny and embarrassing stories along the way, so everyone felt involved.

“In short, meeting our total was down to the generosity of work colleagues, friends and family.”



Steve Wilson, Océ Foot Print, £2,658.70  
Trailwalker 2008, 2009

*“The key to raising our money this year was to offer our suppliers to become one of three corporate sponsors with a minimum of £500 per place. The rest was family and friends... as usual!”*



Clare Hallet, Mother's Pride, £2157.35 and  
Mother's Ruined Again, £2,631.50 (2009)  
Trailwalker 2007, 2008, 2009  
Trailtrekker 2009

2008 Silver Fundraising Prize Winner

*"We have had our best results organising small easily manageable events. We have always found that giving something back to our donors pays dividends..."*

"The first thing I learnt the first time I did Trailwalker (2007) was that you can never start too early with the fundraising. The best feeling in the world is to reach your minimum target before the event, because it is much harder afterwards.

"Christmas is just round the corner and I always put a little note in my Christmas cards (I use those cheap business cards from Vistaprint) saying what you are doing and including your fundraising website address. You can also ask your relatives to sponsor you rather than giving you a Christmas present – generous aunts are often good for both! On a good year you could reasonably hope for about £50 per team member this way (£200).

"We have had our best results organising small easily manageable events. We have always found that giving something back to our donors pays dividends. The 'tried and tested' work for us – eg we run a quiz night, with a raffle and some simple food in the interval (curry, pasta, chicken casserole). This brings in about £150–200 per time minimum. Our local pub lets us hold them there and gives us a cut of the bar takings – very generous, but we could have them in our local village hall if need be. We hold them over the winter once a month from November and plan to have our last one at the end of March.

"We hold a coffee morning at the end of April/beginning of May, also with plants, cakes and books on sale and, of course, a raffle! Last year, this brought in more than £500.

"One of our team works in a local school and they have let her have a uniform-free day (£300). A dress-down day or wear your pyjamas to work day etc is good fun in a big office and brings what you are doing to people's attention and bigger companies often do some form of matched funding.

"We've run a Nepali curry night the last few years – very popular and you can get some great recipes off the net. Also an open mic night where all sorts of people came to have a go and all their friends paid to hear them and we also made money from selling food (and a raffle, of course) – both these made about £500.

"We also have some semi-permanent schemes going on – we have a shelf of second-hand books in our local pub on sale at 50p a piece which has raised over £100 since July for really no work. Three of us have been making batches of chutneys, jams and marmalade to sell since the beginning of the year. Someone else is making cakes and taking them into work to sell – v. popular – by July I bet we will have made £500 just doing these things.

"We have found that by working together to fundraise from day one, no one person is put under too much pressure and we achieve our total in good time. All the time, especially at all our events, we tell everyone what we are doing and where the money goes and how it will be used and encouraging them to sponsor us. Although no one event brings in a huge amount, we are not risking losing lots of money by being too ambitious and it's great for team-building. We also get our support team involved, (which is easy in our case as they are our husbands). It does seem daunting when you start but little and often works for us. With variety so you are not always catching the same people."



Carl Heron, The Thornton Thunderbolts,  
£2,000.56  
Trailtrekker 2009

Photo Courtesy of Yorkshire Post Newspapers

*“ We launched the JustGiving page in January and every time we completed a training walk we updated the page with notes and pictures...”*

“The vast majority of our sponsorship came from family, friends and work colleagues via our JustGiving page. The largest donation was £100 but most were between £10 and £20. Some of the team were able to obtain sponsorship from business contacts. We launched the JustGiving page in January and every time we completed a training walk we updated the page with notes and pictures. This helped to communicate how seriously we were taking the challenge and I think reassured everyone that we were up for it. As Trailtrekker approached we were proactive in giving gentle reminders to those who had told us that they would donate but had not yet got around to doing so.

“One of us organised a second-hand book sale at work with a friend kindly making cakes for sale too. We raised about £100 but it also helped to keep the event in the foreground amongst work colleagues. We also submitted short articles on our training to the local monthly business directory which features news and events.

“It’s essential to let everyone know how you got on. In the days after the event we received many additional donations, some expressing considerable surprise at the fact that all four of us completed the walk in under 25 hours! It helped that the Yorkshire Post featured us on the front cover of Monday’s paper in a wonderful colour image of us ‘powering up’ the steps at Malham Cove.

“In the end, we managed to raise over £2000. There is no magic formula but we were never complacent about raising money and we thanked everyone who was able to give. We are enormously grateful to the long list of thoroughly decent people who supported us in our bid to raise money for Oxfam’s work around the world.

“The Thornton Thunderbolts will begin training for the 2010 trek in January. Once again we will use our training walks to explore how best exceed the 2010 target of £2,000.”



Jackie Rogers, Bombay Sapphires, £3,065.28  
Trailtrekker 2009

*“If there was one piece of advice we could give to teams for 2010, it would be to spread the message as far and wide as possible. People are really interested in what you are doing...”*

“Undertaking Trailtrekker is a significant commitment, both in terms of the actual challenge and, more importantly to Oxfam, the fundraising. The Bombay Sapphires were overwhelmed with the generosity of friends and family. It’s amazing what you can achieve by telling people what you are doing. We increased our fundraising through running two Oxfam Treasure Maps – a great way of raising £300 – and sponsorship of our training kit, ie logos on t-shirts, which you wear during the event.

“One of our team held a cake sale at work and we also had plans for a music event – great if you know any local musicians who will play for free. If there were one piece of advice we could give to teams for 2010, it would be to spread the message as far and wide as possible. People are really interested in what you are doing and our target was achieved through all the small contributions reaching a significant total.”



## Gary Goldman, Arriba Aviva, £2,225 Trailtrekker 2009

*“Take your sponsor form EVERYWHERE (christenings and weddings are good as people are in a giving mood) and point out to family members how selfless you are being in walking 100k.....”*

**Step One** - Agree to do something REALLY stupid for charity (such as walking 100k) and tell EVERYONE you know about just how stupid you are being.

**Step Two** - Coerce at least 2 of your closest friends to do it with you. If these friends have never really enjoyed exercise before then so much the better. If all of you are more comfortable in high heels than walking boots, this is great as people will donate purely out of amusement.

**Step Three** - Register yourselves under a suitably catchy team name on [www.easyfundraising.co.uk](http://www.easyfundraising.co.uk), then go on to [www.vistaprint.co.uk](http://www.vistaprint.co.uk) and print up some business cards and posters with your name and how to register at easyfundraising. While you're being all technical, con a mate into setting up a website and post a blog with pictures of you and your friends looking good in lycra / throwing up at the top of a hill / tripping over the dog etc.

**Step Four** - Hand out your business cards to people you know, people you don't know, and random strangers you meet in the gym while training. This is good for a few hundred as they can donate money while shopping online. It is also good for meeting new friends... maybe not.

**Step Five** - Family and friends are where the real money is. Take your sponsor form EVERYWHERE (christenings and weddings are good as people are in a giving mood) and point out to family members how selfless you are being in walking 100k, while they just have to donate a bob or two. If this doesn't work, threaten to show them your blisters.

**Step Six** - Colleagues are good too, but require more effort than family. Raffling cakes, arranging quizzes and charging for photocopying are all useful. Again, if this fails, threaten to make them walk part of the route with you.

**Step Seven** - If all else fails, beg.