



## Press Release: Charlie Head: The Last Stand

World record attempt: 10<sup>th</sup> September 2021  
British endurance paddleboarder Charlie will undertake first ever 76+ mile paddle in open water by stand-up paddleboard, solo and unsupported, for mental health charity.



# Who is Charlie Head?

Charlie is a British explorer, film maker and endurance athlete from the Isle of Wight.

A trail blazer intent on forging new paths, Charlie seeks out new routes, challenging convention and the boundaries of endurance.

Despite his extensive experience and preparation, Charlie's challenges are rarely straightforward, he is hostage to the elements, equipment failure, and the kindness of strangers.





# What is Charlie doing?

Charlie's current expedition on the Scottish coastline is the final chapter of his solo circumnavigation of the UK by stand-up paddleboard. This has been nine years in the making, all filmed by Charlie himself. Since last September, Charlie has paddled

- from the English border at Berwick upon Tweed
- anticlockwise round Scotland, the first to do so
- carrying all his own supplies and equipment
- to John O'Groats, along the North Coast, and around Cape Wrath
- in the depths of Scottish winter with limited light and poor conditions
- successive "first of a kind" long distance paddles in his Hebridean Odyssey, carving out brand new routes

Charlie took a break from December 2020 to July 2021 due Covid 19 restrictions.





# The Scottish story so far

**7<sup>th</sup> November 2020:** Charlie completed a remarkable overnight 104km nonstop crossing of Moray Firth Solo unsupported in less than 24 hrs through two wind farms in 15 hours of darkness

**10<sup>th</sup> December 2020:** Charlie rounded Cape Wrath, paddling east to west around the most north westerly point of Scotland, believed to be first paddleboarder to do so

**21<sup>st</sup> July 2021:** Charlie crosses “The Minch” From Stoer to Lemreway 70km Solo unsupported in 18hrs

**30<sup>th</sup> July 2021:** Charlie crosses The Inner Hebridean Sea, open water, one of a kind 82km feat solo from Lochboisdale on South Uist, landing on Tiree 15 hours later





# Why does Charlie do what he does?

Charlie undertakes extreme challenges solo and unsupported, documenting his journeys for film, TV and education projects.

As a passionate advocate of freedom to express mental health issues openly and without stigma, Charlie conceived the UK expedition as a social experiment. Going solo and unsupported forces him to ask for help, prompting strangers and communities to come together in collaboration and conversation.

Charlie's openness about tackling his own mental health is a catalyst for connection and communication, prompting mental health conversations at community level and beyond.

## dare2express

Charlie is raising funds for Dare2express, a charity offering financial help to access mental health services. COVID-19 has decimated conventional fundraising activities since 2020, directly affecting the charity's ability to fund such grants.

<https://www.dare2express.org/>





# What is “The Last Stand”?

- Friday 10<sup>th</sup> September will see a huge fundraising and endurance challenge to mark The Last Stand of Charlie’s circumnavigation.
- Charlie will attempt to break the current world record by paddling more than 72 miles nonstop in open water with no support vessel.
- Charlie will have sole responsibility for survival, sustenance and navigation, he carries and prepares all his food and water throughout
- The elements and the tides will be his Gods as he navigates marine traffic, wind farms and ultimately, his mental resolve.

## The world record:

**Current record:** In 2017, South African Chris Bertish set the record for the furthest distance travelled solo, unsupported and unassisted on a paddleboard over open ocean in a day (71.96 miles).

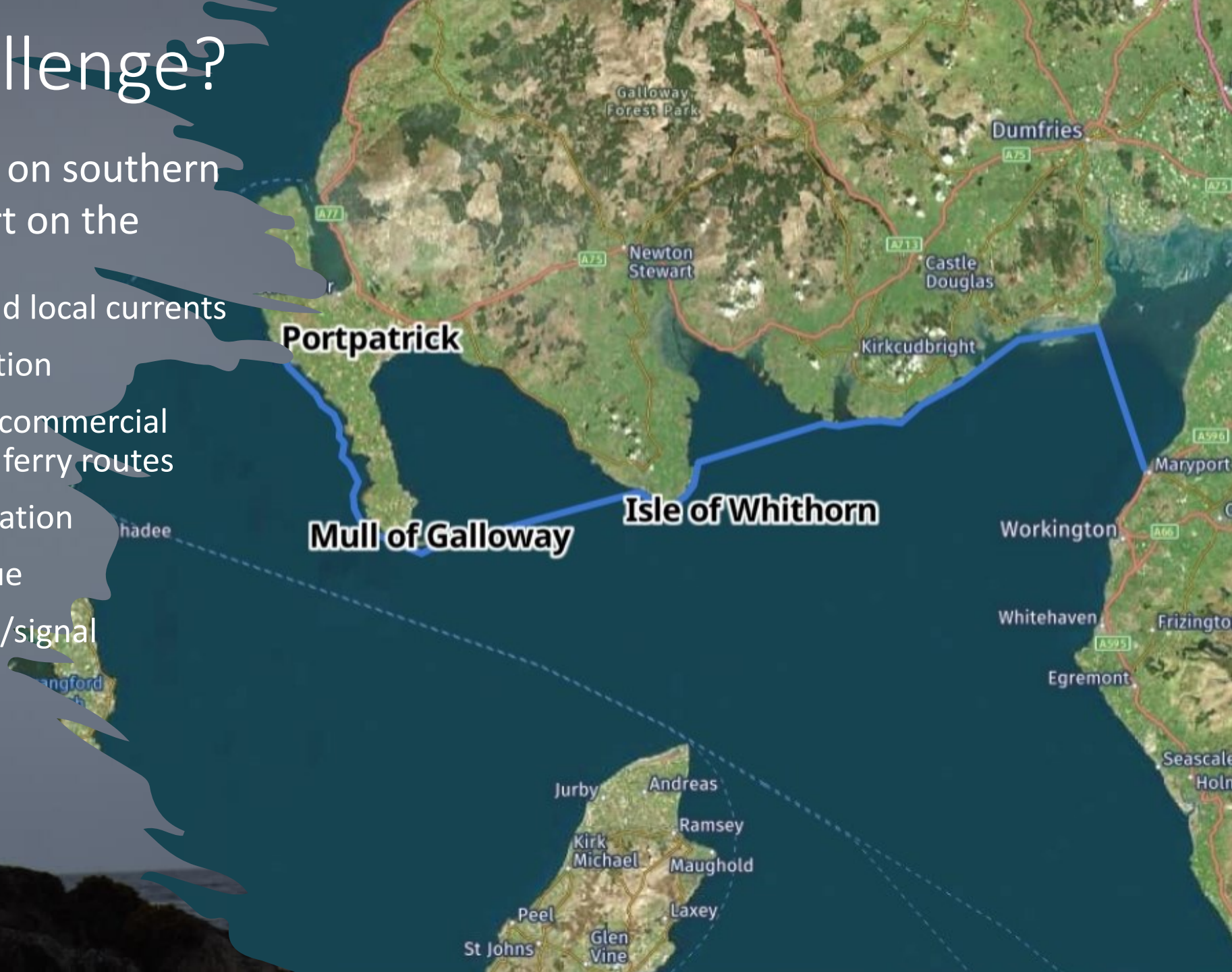




# Route and Challenge?

80 miles from Portpatrick on southern Scottish coast to Maryport on the English coast

- Tide changes and local currents
- Food and hydration
- High volume of commercial shipping traffic, ferry routes
- Nighttime navigation
- Managing fatigue
- Communication/signal



# Expedition Credentials

Charlie can call on the fitness, instincts and experience honed on previous first-of-a-kind expeditions in Greenland, a descent of The Amazon and the Blue Nile by stand-up paddleboard.

**Greenland** “Polar bears and Paddleboards” Expedition 2013

**England and Wales circumnavigation, 2012-2016:** Charlie has circumnavigated the English and Welsh coastlines in two expeditions since 2012.

**Rio Marañón, Peru/Brazil, 2015:** Charlie and his production team made a historic first and last descent of the Rio Marañón, the primary source of the Amazon from high in the Peruvian Andes to Iquitos in Brazil. Charlie not only paddled this river for the last time but also captured the magic and beauty of the river by capturing raw & unedited aerial and POV footage the way, in association with Red Bull TV

**The Last Descent, The Blue Nile, 2017:** Charlie leapt on the last chance to paddle the Blue Nile River in its free-flowing state before the completion of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam upstream, near the border with Sudan. Now completed, the essence of this river is changed forever by the dam. The reservoir is starting to flood 230 km of plains and valleys, including the lower part of the Grand Canyon section. Charlie and his team successfully descended this iconic river, honouring the river and telling her story in film and educational resources, before it was changed forever.

The first and possibly last adult to travel along the Scottish Border from east to west coast on a child's bike, towing 80kg!





# For Editors

**Motivation to undertake big crossings:** “Because it hasn’t been done, I’m driven to find my limits, and it’s meditative for me. You feel more alive out on the water – it’s about surviving, pushing yourself and seeing what you can achieve”.

“Living and coping with mental illness is emotionally darker and colder than the Solway Firth could ever be. A 24hr crossing is part of the challenge, it’s me fighting back and a testament to my belief in people and community being worth the physical discomfort”

**On addressing mental health through expeditions and sport:** “These journeys are an insight into my own mind and an exploration into what we can do together to alleviate some of the pressing traumas that so many of us face”

**On solo expedition life:** “An opportunity to sit with my own thoughts, an opportunity to explore myself in way I can’t do at home”

**On the physical challenge:** “The physical challenge comes down to maths. It is about keeping paddling, eating and resting in the right ratios and recognising any change in circumstances that jeopardizes those ratios. Previous endurance challenges give me the experience to maintain a balance between fatigue, temperature and staying alert”





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