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Paddleboard pair delighted and dazed after going from Land's End to John O'Groats

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Dave and Sophie with their paddleboards after arriving at John O'Groats.

An intrepid fundraising duo said they felt both delighted and dazed after becoming the first pair to travel from Land's End to John O'Groats by stand-up paddleboard.

Dave Chant and Sophie Witter covered more than 1703km on a mixture of sea, rivers and canals during their three-month adventure in aid of three charities.

They began their challenge – which they named SUP It & Sea – at Land's End on July 16 and arrived in John O'Groats on October 12.

Dave (39) and Sophie (31), who come from Berkshire, found conditions off the east coast of Caithness "really tough going" but the sea was relatively calm around Duncansby Head.

They had earlier cut across the Highlands by paddling through the Caledonian Canal.

"The journey overall was incredible and so varied," Sophie said. "We had parts that we expected to be easier that were really difficult, like the Lake District coastline, and then areas that treated us kindly, such as Cornwall.

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"What remained constant throughout, though, was the amazing people we met along the way and the kindness of strangers.

Dave passing Keiss on the way to John O'Groats.

"We found the east coast of Scotland just incredibly beautiful – what we loved were the waterfalls and the perspective we got from the water that you wouldn't get otherwise."

She described the last day of the challenge as "a whirlwind".

They paddleboarders made it from Lybster to Wick in about three hours. "We then hit Noss Head on our way to some of our possible get-outs in Sinclair's Bay and that was really tough going," Sophie explained.

"I felt like I was going backwards, while Dave, not wanting to leave me behind, was standing still. It was a slog that really took it out of us physically.

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"We would be hitting Duncansby Head as close to slack water as you can get around Duncansby and we would be within the first hour of the tide turning.

Sophie and Dave at Land's End at the start of their journey in July. Picture: Mandy Thomas

"We were expecting the worst as we rounded the corner but it was beautifully calm and we realised 'this is it'. We had been chased relentlessly by seals but we didn't care at this point we had John O'Groats in sight.

"On arriving it all felt surreal. We were happy and excited but very dazed, which I don't think was helped by the fact that our amazing support crew greeted us with a bottle of prosecco.

"We were in awe of the fact that people had gathered and were clapping for us and everyone was so kind. It was truly an amazing but surreal moment that I think will take some time to sink in."

There were 25 days when the pair had to stop either for a rest or because of bad weather or car problems.

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another."

She added: "The canals were beautiful and also offered us some respite in a way, as canal and river paddling was our comfort zone so it was nice to be on flat water – with the exception of Loch Ness."

Dave and Sophie are aiming to raise more than £24,000 for three causes – Wilderness Foundation, the RNLI and Frontline Children.

Donations can be made online via the [SUP It & Sea website](#).

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