

# February 2019 Newsletter

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## Welcome to the February Update!

We know it is only the shortest month of the year by a few days, but we think it flew by in the blink of an eye - and still we crammed so much in!



Last month we launched [#StMarksWeekInTheLife](#), a series of photos that we're sharing every Friday, capturing the breadth of what is happening every week here at St Mark's Hospital. Here's what we've shared so far.

Be sure to follow us on social media to make sure you don't miss a post!

## Thank you!



Thank you to everyone who shopped with [AmazonSmile](#) between October and December 2018. Without it costing you a penny, you raised money which continues to help us in our fight for a future free from the fear of bowel disease!

[Join our Colon Challenge 2019 team](#)



There's still time to sign up to take part in our 270-mile four-day cycling event following the colon-shaped route from Berkhamsted, Herts to Kings Cross.

Interested in joining our team? [Click here!](#)



## Royal Parks Half Marathon 2019

This spectacular Half Marathon takes place in central London following a stunning 13.1 mile route taking in the capital's world-famous landmarks. [Click here to find out more!](#)



### Fighting for a future free from the fear of bowel disease - Toby's story

At just six years old, Toby was diagnosed with Peutz-Jeghers Syndrome (PJS), a very rare polyposis syndrome that is usually inherited, although it can occur spontaneously. People with PJS develop polyps throughout the gut (anywhere between the mouth and the anus) which have the potential to cause fatal blockages and become cancerous.

Toby has undergone dozens of operations to monitor and remove polyps. At least two of these planned and emergency operations have been life-saving.

In December 2017, Toby underwent a seven hour operation which involved the removal of four polyps, the longest one measuring 4.5cm. Toby's mum, Rachel, explains: 'St Mark's assembled a team of world leaders in this specialist field to perform the most difficult and precise surgery on Toby, doing everything they could to avoid open surgery which is associated with several complications, including death. It was only later that they told us how worried they had been for Toby.'



Thank you to everyone who responded to our 2018 seasonal appeal, featuring Toby's story of his ongoing experience with St Mark's Hospital.

Together you raised **£8,520.81!**



## 40tude Sahara Desert Trek

Congratulations to the intrepid trekkers who last month completed 40tude's latest Adventure Challenge:

to walk 100km of the Sahara over four days.

So far a fantastic £57,000 has been raised as a result of 40tude's Sahara 2019 Challenge, enabling 40tude to continue to help fund research projects at St Mark's targeted at the prevention of colon cancer, including the PERFECTS and PROGRESS programmes. You can find out more about their adventure [here](#).

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## The Blaze Ensemble are back

Last summer, the wonderful Blaze Ensemble entertained us at St James's Church in Piccadilly with proceeds from the event going to the Foundation.

Dr Max Pitcher and the orchestra are back again to launch Max's Colon Challenge 2019 fundraising. Not only will Max be taking part in the performance as a member of the ensemble, but almost exactly a month later, he will be taking on the Colon Challenge, a 270 mile bike ride in the shape of a colon (for the 4th time!) to once again raise much needed funds for research at St Mark's Hospital.

**You can find out more or purchase your tickets [here](#).**

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## Meet the team!

**Name:** *Riyah Talati*

**Job title:** *Trust and Foundations Fundraising Manager*

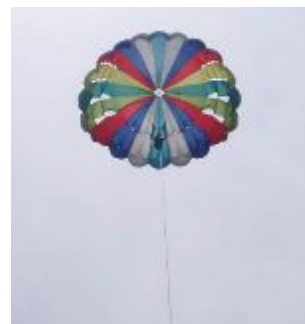
**Number of years in the role:** *10 years this month!*

**What does the role entail?:** *Day-to-day, I work to secure funding and donations for the St Mark's research medical staff.*

*They may need funding for lab costs, specialist medical equipment or salaries for the individuals needed to deliver the research. I am also involved with identifying and developing major donors.*

*The best days are when I get to meet our supporters who often just pop into the office with a donation and share their St Mark's story. Oh, and when I get a grant!*

**Tell us something interesting about you:** *I do not like heights but threw caution to the wind on holiday in Turkey and went parasailing. I concluded that I prefer my feet on the ground and*



*will not be repeating the experience!*

Are you a trust or foundation who would be interested in finding out more about St Mark's? [Contact Riyah here.](#)

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**BT MyDonate** will be closing its fundraising doors as of **Sunday 30th June** after a number of years supporting charities through their commission free fundraising platform. If you have any questions about what this means for your fundraising, please click [here](#).

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