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DEVOTED dad Paul Wilkinson is head and shoulders above the rest in every sense of the word!

For he is planning to tackle the London to Brighton Challenge – on stilts! – all for the love of his teenage daughter Ellie.

Ellie (15) suffers from cystic fibrosis and Paul is carrying out the marathon stilt walk to raise much needed funds for the charity which funds research to test the symptoms and find an effective treatment.

As the majority of people who take part in the challenge will run, jog or walk the 60 miles, Paul, of Bolton-by-Bowland, thought he would try something completely different!

He said: “The CF Trust is a fantastic charity that funds essential research, promotes clinical excellence and supports people with CF and their families.

“If I can raise some extra funds for the CF Trust by walking London to Brighton on stilts then I’ll do it with a smile... until that gets replaced by a grimace!

“CF is a terrible condition. It’s incredibly lonely, as people with CF are not allowed to mix due to the risks of cross-infection.

“It’s also a kind of invisible thing. There are no real signs someone has CF, but to try and keep healthy they have an extraordinary regime of physio and medication, including taking over 30 tablets a day.

“And you never know what’s around the corner. One bad infection and you can be in hospital and struggling to recover lung function.”

Cystic fibrosis affects more than 9,000 people in the UK and one in 25 people carry the faulty gene that causes it.

“It affects the internal organs, especially the lungs and digestive system, by clogging them with thick, sticky mucus making it hard for sufferers to breathe and to digest food.

People with cystic fibrosis have to endure a rigorous daily treatment regime, including physiotherapy to clear the chest, inhaled and injected drugs to thin the mucus and fight infections and dozens of enzyme pills to help digest food.

Paul, technical director at mi Technology, Leyland, added: “There is a lot to be positive about. New treatments are being developed but the costs are crippling – both for development and for treatment.

“The CF Trust has been instrumental in supporting the development of new treatments and lobbying to get drug companies to provide the new treatments at prices that are affordable for the NHS.

“I know there are many worthy causes asking for funding so I – and, more importantly, Ellie and all the other people with CF – really appreciate anything that people can donate.”

The event takes place on Sunday, May 13th, and Paul will be cheered on by his wife, Rachel, and Ellie, who is a pupil at Clitheroe Royal Grammar School.

Two years ago Paul completed the 90 mile coast-to-coast walk along the path of Hadrian’s Wall to raise cash for the charity.

He is keen to get as much support through sponsorship as possible and anyone who would like to help is can long on to [www.virginmoneygiving.com/pw](http://www.virginmoneygiving.com/pw) for some more information