



## **Barefoot Billion - A Poet walks 1,000 miles barefoot to raise money for vulnerable children.**

Poet Philip Wells will be undertaking an epic 1,000 mile pilgrimage, walking barefoot 'in the footsteps of the bards' through England and Wales between 22nd April - 15th August.

Philip's goal is to engage the people of the UK to 'Be the Step'; to bring change through raising awareness and funding for children all over the world suffering from poverty and deprivation.

As he walks between the country's most historic and literary landmarks, Philip will deliver poetry performances at schools, pubs and prestigious venues along the way. He will also seek the help of fellow-walkers ranging from rappers and poets, to painters and celebrities. With their help, he will be uncovering England and Wales's forgotten history and engaging with our countries literary geniuses to determine what connections our modern age has with our pre-Celtic ancestors.

This is a project that examines why our history matters; why we have to rediscover those lost ancestral voices in order to make a positive impact on our modern day society; a society that has become far too complex in comparison to the simplicity of the pre-bronze age. By Looking into the past, Philip hopes to create a vision of the future for children around the world who have so little.

All funds raised will benefit three charities specifically focused on positive change for children most in need: The Consortium for Street Children, Born Free's Global Friends Project and Ocean Stars Trust.

This whole adventure will be filmed by A-Z Films Ltd.

The Barefoot Billion project will be launched on 12<sup>th</sup> April 2014 at Somerset House on London's Embankment. This being the International Day for Street Children, Philip will be joined by children and celebrities alike to launch the project and lead them on a 3 mile walk along the Southbank and over the Millennium Bridge to give the gathered guests a first glimpse of the challenges ahead.

The 'Barefoot Billion' is a metaphor, representing what UNICEF estimates to be over a billion children who suffer from at least one form of severe deprivation (1). Philip will be walking barefoot to express the vulnerability of those walking through life without adequate nutrition, water, sanitation, health, shelter or education.

### **About the Charities:**

**Consortium for Street Children** [www.streetchildren.org.uk](http://www.streetchildren.org.uk)



CSC is the only global network *focused exclusively* on supporting street connected children. Whether that be children living on the streets, working on the streets or simply those who just hang out on the streets. CSC's focus is empowering these children and helping them to help themselves. They currently comprise some 50 organisations from around the world working in over 100 countries. Street children deserve to have their specific needs, wants and rights understood and to be represented at the highest level. This is what CSC seeks to do.

**Ocean Stars Trust** [www.oceanstars.org.uk](http://www.oceanstars.org.uk)



Ocean Stars Trust (OST) was established in 2005 following the Boxing Day tsunami of 2004. **Their vision** is to relieve suffering among disadvantaged people in Sri Lanka by providing them with the necessary skills to rebuild their shattered lives whether following natural disasters or with the aftermath of civil conflict. OST supports a wide range of projects across Sri Lanka but has a special interest in child education especially that of pre-school children where there is little government support in the country.



**Born Free's Global Friends** [www.bornfree.org.uk](http://www.bornfree.org.uk)

The Born Free Foundation is an international wildlife charity working in some of the most remote regions in Africa and Asia, areas which are also home to some of the poorest communities in the world. They believe there is an intrinsic link between poverty and the environment and they understand the important part that local communities play in supporting the environment. Recently Born Free have launched Born Free's Global Friends where they aim to support the local community that lives alongside the wildlife. They believe the children are a huge part of this. By educating children in these poor areas they will not only substantially improve the children's lives but also ensure they grow up with a greater respect for their natural environment.

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