

PRESS RELEASE

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Local woman takes up Lymphoedema literary trek challenge**Click to sponsor Suzie at www.justgiving.com/keatswalk**

Researcher Suzie Grogan is facing the challenge of a lifetime as she gears up to follow in the footsteps of her favourite poet John Keats, walking more than 100 miles in Lancashire and the Lake District

Suzie, 46, is a freelance researcher and writer from Wellington in Somerset and in the summer of 2008 she will be donning her walking gear and setting off from Lancaster on the first leg of a walk to raise money for the Lymphoedema Support Network and St Margaret's Somerset Hospice.

"It's a long time since I have done any serious exercise" says Suzie. "Now I'm getting up an hour earlier every day to either walk or swim. And I've had to hide the chocolate and chips. I must be mad!"

The hard work will all be worthwhile for Suzie if she succeeds in raising £5,000 for The Lymphoedema Support Network and the Hospice. Suzie has had Lymphoedema in her legs since her teens and following surgery for breast cancer in September 2006 she is now at risk of developing it in her arm.

"When I was diagnosed with Lymphoedema in my late teens it was very difficult," Suzie explained. "Even 25 years on many doctors do not understand the condition and it is often misdiagnosed. The diagnosis of breast cancer was in itself devastating but after successful treatment many women like myself need to know how to protect themselves from developing Lymphoedema, which can be both disabling and potentially dangerous

"But when you are put in touch with the Lymphoedema Support Network you immediately have the support and information you need to make sure the medical profession take your symptoms seriously. They are a very small organisation but punch well beyond their weight, raising issues in parliament and lobbying Primary Care Trusts to ensure treatment is available for all who need it." Suzie is also quick to praise St Margaret's Hospice, where Lymphoedema patients in Somerset are lucky enough to receive wonderful care from Ali Batchelor, the nurse specialist. Not all parts of the UK are lucky enough to have this care, and money is tight everywhere.



"The LSN and the Hospice have done so much for us all, now it's time I did something for them. John Keats undertook a similar walk in 1818 and it inspired him to write poetry that has given me comfort in some tough times. I want to walk and write, inspired as he was. I hope to publish an account of my trip – noting the many differences between my walk and his. He didn't have to contend with the main A591, or thousands of people spilling out of coach tours to the area for a start!"

Suzie is well known in the Lymphoedema community for her work as chair of the Taunton area Lymphoedema Support Group, and she is hoping the local communities in both Somerset and Cumbria and Scotland will support her in this marathon challenge.

"My friends on the support group are very generous and I hope other people, and businesses, will sponsor me if they can," said Suzie. "Even a few pounds will make a huge difference and mean The Lymphoedema Support Network and St Margaret's Hospice can continue their invaluable work." **(List of sponsors)**

You can sponsor Suzie by visiting her online fundraising page on www.justgiving.com/keatswalk. You can pay by credit or debit card, and the money will go directly to the nominated charities. Where supporters are UK taxpayers, the charity will automatically receive 28% extra in Gift Aid, which makes Justgiving the most efficient way of sponsoring Suzie.

Notes to Editors

For further information or to arrange a photo call please contact Suzie on 07870 666638, or at suzannegrogan@yahoo.com.

For further information on the LSN see www.lymphoedema.org/lsn. For St Margaret's Hospice contact Diana Davies **Tel: 01935 709485**

For further information on Justgiving.com, please contact Franklin Rae Communications on 020 7317 5400.