



## **PRESS RELEASE**

**RS Marine Group**

**14 May 2024**

### **Geoff Holt MBE sets sail on his epic UK circumnavigation challenge ‘Finishing the Dream’**

Involving months of planning and preparation, quadriplegic adventurer Geoff Holt MBE DL set sail from St. Katherine’s Dock, London in a record-breaking challenge to circumnavigate the UK coastline.

Sponsored by UK-based RS Marine Group, alongside the Stelios Philanthropic Foundation, Hugh James and Raymarine, the official ‘Finishing the Dream’ journey will call in at 17 accessible ports across the country in a fully-accessible Cheetah Marine power catamaran to raise £1.2m for the registered charity, Wetwheels Foundation via the team’s [Just Giving page](#).

Dedicating his life to providing access to the sea for disabled people, culminating in this latest and final challenge, Geoff hopes to raise funds for four new Wetwheels boats, offering life-changing experiences to over 5,000 of the most profoundly disabled people each year.

### **The Challenge**

Geoff and his team will head west along the South Coast, calling in at various ports to help raise awareness of his adventure. He will also take time to call in at the eight current Wetwheels locations that are responsible for delivering thousands of boat trips around the UK each year to disabled people.

The route is estimated to take him 4-6 weeks to complete, which will be undertaken in a disability accessible Wetwheels Cheetah Marine power catamaran, with a small support team following the journey. Stops will incorporate some of the UK’s most famous ports, including Dover, Falmouth, Holyhead, Bangor, Oban, Whitby and Lowestoft, finishing up back in the UK’s capital.

The Lord Mayor of London, Michael Mainelli, joined Geoff and his team before their departure from St. Katharine’s Dock, commenting: “I’m delighted to see Geoff and his team set off on this remarkable challenge for an inspiring cause in which my mayoral theme ‘Connect to Prosper



Experiment Series' will play a part. Throughout the journey, Geoff and the team will be sampling and collecting microplastics along the UK coastline as part of the Suzuki Clean Ocean Project.

“As one of the greatest threats to our oceans and marine wildlife which is worth more than \$1.5tn to world economies per year, it’s integral that the City of London is at the forefront of tackling the challenge of microplastics and providing a hub for thought leaders to connect. Wetwheels' work at the forefront of scientific advances that drive improvements of our environment while meeting its incredible objective of opening the water for those who otherwise are unable to access it, is an inspiration to us all.”

As he embarked on his final Wetwheels challenge, Geoff Holt MBE DL comments: “Today is the start of the next chapter in my life and possibly my biggest challenge to date. Having spent 40 years in a wheelchair, paralysed from the chest down, the sea has been my salvation, the freedom and independence I get when I am afloat, I can forget about my disability. I have devoted most of my life to promoting the opportunities and benefits sailing offers disabled people and now this is my opportunity to spread that message throughout the United Kingdom.

“I am very honoured that the Lord Mayor of London himself, Michael Mainelli, has taken time out of his busy schedule to officially start the challenge, and where better, than Tower Bridge in our capital city of London. I am really looking forward to the next few weeks although I am very much aware of the challenges ahead, not least the physical and mental impact on myself on the boat for up to 8 hours a day but also the massive logistical challenge for our shore team as we travel around the UK.

“My biggest hope is we can inspire more disabled people to join us for an experience on Wetwheels. Hopefully this will also inspire people to raise money to achieve my dream of acquiring another four Wetwheels boats, making a total of 12 around the UK.

“The 1,500-mile journey will be a test for not only my physical endurance but also a mental challenge as I juggle the logistics of navigating through some of the most dangerous and congested waters in the world.

“Only when I cross the finish line back in London and we hit our fundraising targets, will I allow myself to relax. Hopefully, by demonstrating that a quadriplegic, 40 years paralysed from the



chest down, still has the ability to achieve his dreams will inspire more disabled people to find out about Wetwheels and support the amazing work we do.”

### **Wetwheels Foundation**

Geoff will be raising money for the Wetwheels Foundation, a registered charity whose patron is HRH The Princess Royal. The charity offers unique opportunities for disabled and disadvantaged people of all ages – including those with multiple, profound and complex impairments – to access the water in custom boats designed specifically for wheelchair access. Guests are active participants, rather than simply passengers, with the opportunity to steer the vessel and learn seamanship alongside peers, friends and families.

Currently Geoff has amassed a fleet of eight vessels around the UK and aims to add another four as a result of this challenge and continue to reach an additional 5,000 disabled people each year.

### **About Geoff Holt MBE DL**

Geoff Holt MBE DL has dedicated his life to providing access to the sea for disabled people, demonstrating that there are no limits to what can be achieved. ‘Finishing The Dream’ is the incredible challenge he is undertaking for 2024.

Geoff was paralysed in a swimming accident in 1984 and has spent 40 years in a wheelchair facing and overcoming often unimaginable challenges. His adventurous spirit and determination for exploration has seen Geoff achieve things most people would think were impossible. In 2007 he became the first severely disabled person to sail single-handed around Great Britain. In 2009, he was the first quadriplegic to sail across the Atlantic Ocean unassisted.

He was awarded an MBE for Services to Sailing in 2010 and named ‘Yachtsman of the Year’ shortly after. Along with being a patron and ambassador for several charities and motivational speaker, Geoff set up his own charity in 2011, The Wetwheels Foundation, to enable disabled people to access the sea barrier-free in purpose-built, state-of-the-art motorboats.

To find out more about the challenge, donate to the cause and track Geoff’s journey visit:

<https://finishingthedream.co.uk/>



More information on RS Marine Group, including the Cheetah Marine Power Catamaran, visit:  
<https://www.rsmarinegroup.com>

**ENDS**

**NOTES TO EDITORS:**

- Within the RS Marine Group, RS Sailing is internationally renowned for producing durable, award winning, and fun sailing dinghies. RS Electric Boats works towards reducing emissions from chase boats. The Pulse 63 is 100% electric, uses emissions-free propulsion, and is made using sustainable materials. Cheetah Marine and RS Electric Boats joined forces in 2022 to develop a new generation of electric workboats. The companies are working together to accelerate the evolution of dependable electric boats for commercial, and leisure use. Ocean Play is a collaboration between RS Marine Group and Jo Richards to manufacture Picos, Bugs, Bahias and Vagos. As well as manufacturing to Richards' original design, Ocean Play offers worldwide customer services for all four boats.  
[www.rsmarinegroup.com](http://www.rsmarinegroup.com) | 01794 526760  
[www.oceanplay.club](http://www.oceanplay.club) | [www.rselectricboats.com](http://www.rselectricboats.com) | [www.rssailing.com](http://www.rssailing.com) | [www.cheetahmarine.com](http://www.cheetahmarine.com)
- Cheetah Marine launched its first catamaran in 1990. Designed by founder Sean Stevens, who was then a commercial fisherman, it was made to handle rough seas and beach safely in surf. Since then, the company has built over 600 catamarans for commercial seamen, fisherman, divers, patrol personnel, hydrographic surveyors, expedition skippers and more.  
[www.cheetahmarine.co.uk](http://www.cheetahmarine.co.uk) | 01983 852398
- RS Electric Boats' parent brand, RS Sailing is internationally renowned for producing durable, award winning, and fun sailing dinghies. RS Electric Boats was born from the company's desire to reduce emission from chase boats. Production facilities for its Pulse 63 – a RIB with fully integrated electric hard drive – has recently moved to the Hamble. The Pulse 63 is 100% electric, uses emissions-free propulsion, and is made using sustainable materials.  
[www.rselectricboats.com](http://www.rselectricboats.com) | [www.rssailing.com](http://www.rssailing.com) | 01794 526760

**Media enquiries:** MAA – Mike Shepherd [mike@maa.agency](mailto:mike@maa.agency) | 02392 534853

A selection of images is available online at <https://maa.agency/media-centre/>