

## **Action for Stammering Children becomes nominated charity for Nefud Sun's Anvil Expedition**

Action for Stammering Children, the UK charity that supports children and young people who stammer, has entered into a partnership with the 2024 Nefud Desert Expedition: "Striking the Sun's Anvil" to raise funds for its life-changing work and public awareness about stammering.

The Nefud Desert is in the northern Arabian Peninsula. The most challenging region of the Desert is known as the Sun's Anvil. The local Bedouins consider it impossible to cross by camel in the daytime because of the relentless heat, glare and lack of water. The Expedition will find a novel route through the Anvil using alternatively fuelled, low carbon-footprint vehicles.

Ria Bernard, Chief Executive of Action for Stammering Children said, "We were delighted to be chosen as the partner charity for the Expedition. Being associated with such an inspiring and adventurous expedition will help us raise awareness of stammering and much-needed funds to support children and young people. Children who stammer face misunderstanding and even hostility on a daily basis and this can damage their self-confidence and hold them back from achieving their potential. Our partnership with the Expedition will help change that for hundreds of children."

Expedition leader Alan Crofts said, "I wanted to support Action for Stammering Children because while growing up I had a severe stammer and well understand the fear, stress and daily issues that govern the lives of those with this misunderstood condition but also learnt how to cope with and, through recognising individual confidence and strength, to thrive and eventually to largely overcome the stammer. The expedition team feel excited and privileged to support the amazing young people who are associated with Action for Stammering Children"

The expedition consists of six team members and will be completed in three vehicles. As well as pathfinding routes across the Nefud desert, the expedition will:

- Create an expedition template to minimise ecological disturbance and reduce carbon footprint to a minimum
- Locate and record lost archaeological features and sites in collaboration with the Saudi Arabian Mada in Salih archaeological foundation
- Create detailed maps of the route, terrain features and water sources

### **Contact:**

Action for Stammering Children: [info@stammeringchildren.org](mailto:info@stammeringchildren.org) or 020 3316 8113

Nefud Team contact: Dr Alan Crofts, Southport UK. [Alancrofts928@icloud.com](mailto:Alancrofts928@icloud.com) or 07964 928 126

[www.actionforstammeringchildren.org](http://www.actionforstammeringchildren.org)

<https://www.nefudexpedition2024.org/>

**Notes:**

The Nefud is a desert in the northern part of the Arabian Peninsula at 28.30°N 41.00°E occupying a great oval depression. It is 290 kilometres (180 mi) long and 225 kilometres (140 mi) wide, with an area of 103,600 square kilometres (40,000 sq mi).

The Nefud is a sand sea (erg) and is noted for its sudden violent winds, which account for the large crescent-shaped dunes. The sand in the Nefud is a brick-reddish colour and rain only comes once or twice a year. In some lowland areas, namely those near the Hejaz Mountains, there are oases where dates, vegetables, barley, and fruits are grown.

The Arabian peninsula and the Nefud were the gateway for the human expansion out of Africa multiple times over the past 400,000 years. This was made possible by a shift to a wetter climate, creating green corridors in the region. Recent archaeological and paleoclimatic studies show that these hominid migrations led to the formation of civilisations in the region.

“The Sun’s Anvil” is an area of the north west Nefud where the sun relentlessly beats down on a vast plain of white sand. Because of the heat, glare and lack of available water, the local Bedouins consider the Anvil as impossible to cross by camel in the daytime. This remote, mystical area is characterised by the mirage and sand-devils conjured from the land by the rising breeze.

**Action for Stammering Children:**

Stammering affects approximately 5 – 8 % of children at some point, with typical onset between two and five years of age.

Developmental stammering is a neurodevelopmental condition affecting the rhythm and fluency of speech. It can have a significant impact on children’s social and emotional development, resulting in adverse mental health outcomes.

Action for Stammering Children is the UK charity for children and young people who stammer, their families, and the communities who support them. We’re here to make sure that every child who stammers has the support, respect and confidence to live the life they want to lead. We support and empower parents, caregivers and professionals; facilitate and champion research; and campaign for changes in policy and societal attitudes.