

Cardo Group Backs Walking Wales Challenge as First Official Sponsor

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Cardo Group has become the first sponsor of Speakeasy Club's Walking Wales challenge, a campaign aimed at raising £25,000 to support men's mental health and highlight the role of local sports clubs in supporting wellbeing.

Established in 2022, Speakeasy Club is a not-for-profit organisation dedicated to supporting people through mental health challenges through sport and community-based initiatives.

The 'BIG Bench2bench Walk 2026 - Walking Wales' challenge will see participants walk 260 miles from Holyhead Hotspur to Sully Sports FC in six days, from 12 September to 17 September, with a fundraising target of £25,000 to help the organisation continue providing free mental health resources in sports clubs.

The route includes stops at 25 community rugby, football, and tennis clubs where the fundraising team will meet with committee members and club members at each location and celebrate the vital role these clubs play in their communities.

Each club will receive a set of resources designed to create a supportive environment and encourage open conversations around men's mental health.

This includes Speakeasy Club-branded rugby balls and footballs with QR codes that link to online support, a club-coloured bench or barrel with embedded resources, posters and signposting material, and free online mental health training.

Cardo's sponsorship builds on its longstanding support of Speakeasy Club and its mission to make free mental health support standard in every UK community sports club.

As part of its backing, Cardo has funded more than 200 QR-coded rugby balls and footballs, as well as an '8 For A Mate' mental health education session for each of the 25 clubs on the route. These sessions will be delivered either in person or online and are based on the idea that just eight minutes can be enough to help someone feel seen and heard, and potentially save a life.

Simon Clarke, Founder of Speakeasy Club, said: "We're incredibly grateful to be supported by Cardo again. Our values closely align - particularly around respect, integrity, and authenticity - and their unwavering backing continues to play a vital role in our mission to get free mental health resources into every community sports club in the world.

"Their support is especially important as we take on our huge challenge this September, helping to fund over 200 QR code rugby and footballs, while also driving the legacy work through our '8 For A Mate' campaign - encouraging people to give a mate eight minutes, down the club, to feel seen and heard. That simple act can make all the difference to someone's mental health, both on and off the pitch.

"Without Cardo's ongoing support and the strong alignment between our organisations, we wouldn't be able to keep pushing forward and achieving what we set out to do. We're hugely thankful to everyone involved at Cardo."

Alana McCarthy, Director of Partnerships at Cardo Group, said: "Having been a long-time supporter of Speakeasy Club, we've seen the direct impact Simon and his incredible team of volunteers make in breaking down barriers around men's mental health.

"Community sports clubs play a vital role in bringing people together and we're proud to support an initiative that helps ensure more people have access to safe, inclusive spaces where they feel able to talk openly and are heard."

Members of the public are encouraged to get involved by joining the walk - whether for a short stretch or a full day - or by supporting the challenge in other ways, including donations or practical assistance such as providing accommodation, food, or drinks along the route.

To sign up to join the fundraising team on their journey or show support, visit: <https://speakeasyclub.charityhive.co.uk/events/6/the-big-bench2bench-walk-2026-walking-wales>

Donations can be made directly via the following link: <https://speakeasyclub.charityhive.co.uk/fundraising/simon-clarke-1>

For more information on Speakeasy Club and the 'Walking Wales' challenge, visit: <https://speakeasyclub.co.uk/the-bench2bench-walks/>