



# Be part of our Virtual School Mission

Join me and 400 other UK schools as they  
tackle their very own Virtual School Mission

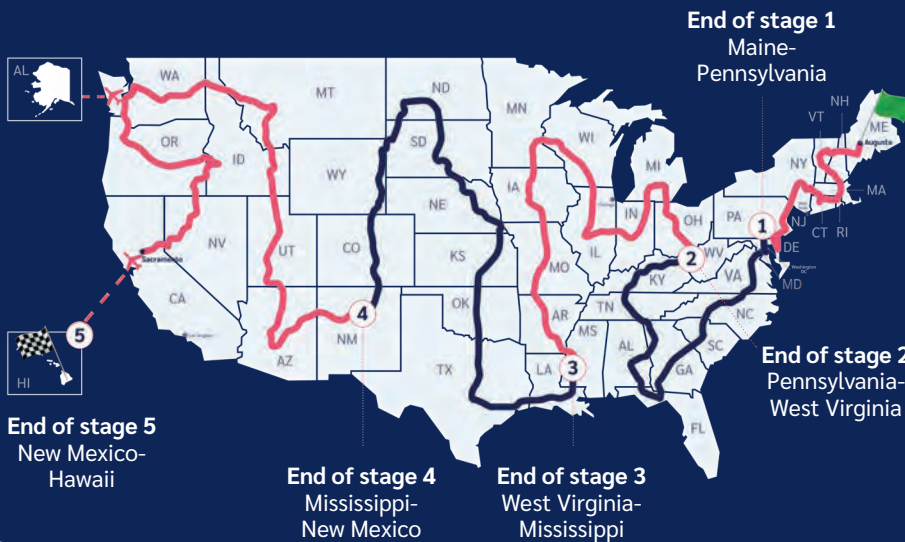
#FindYourHappy



In May 2022, I'm off to the USA where I will run and cycle unaided, 14,000 miles across all 50 US states in just 104 days.

Do you want to join me on my journey? Read on to find out more.

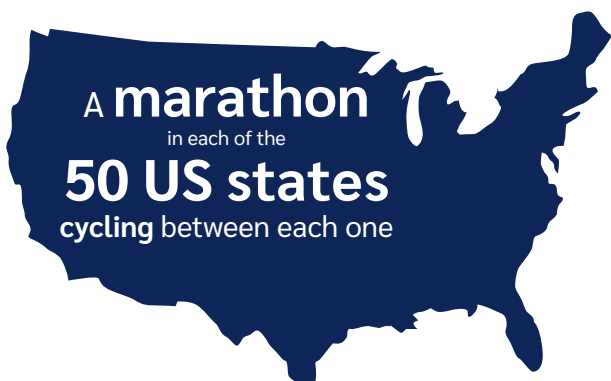
## ROUTE MAP



## CHALLENGE STATS

**14,000** miles across **50 US states** in **104** days

### Physical challenge



**1,114**

hours of physical activity



calories  
will be  
burnt

### Financial challenge

**£500K**

to be raised to support

**The 401 Foundation**

### Emotional challenge

**401** schools involved

to inspire and challenge people to do things  
they never thought they could do

### Mental challenge



to raise awareness  
of **mental health**  
in the UK

### Legacy

To impact  
the lives of

**750K**

people through a  
schools wellbeing  
programme



**12,690**  
miles of cycling



**1,310**  
miles of running

**437,000 ft** of climbing

equivalent to

**15 x up Mount Everest!**







**H**i, I'm Ben Smith, nice to meet you! In 2015 I set out on a mission that would change not only my life but the lives of thousands of other people around the world.

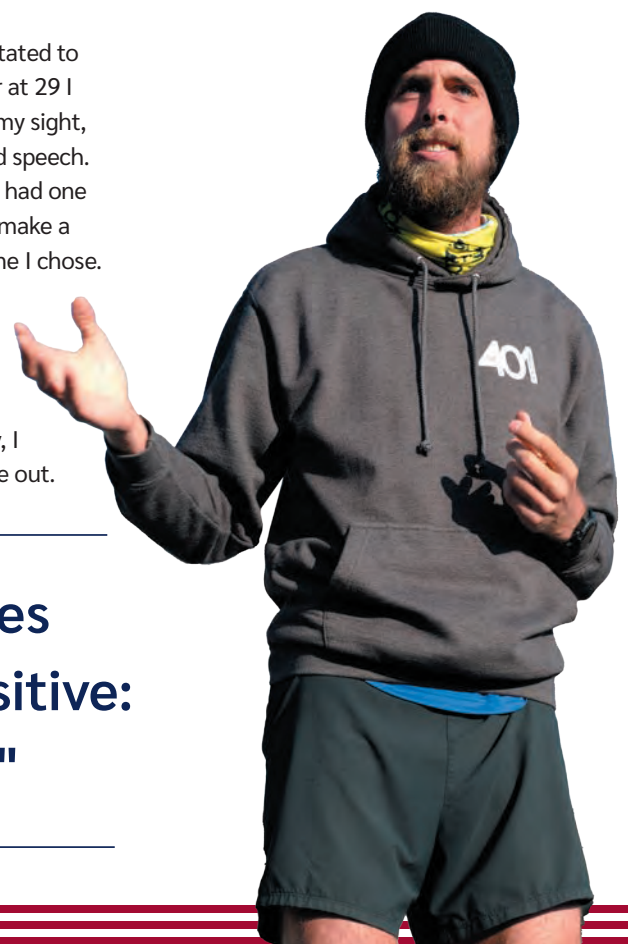
Growing up I suffered at the hands of bullies, it had a huge and lasting impact on both my confidence and self esteem. At 13 I

discovered I was gay but felt the need to cover this up through fear of being attacked. At 18 I tried to take my own life because I was tired of feeling the way I felt everyday.

Throughout my 20s I led a life dictated to me by others, successful on paper at 29 I suffered a TIA temporarily losing my sight, hearing, feeling in my left arm and speech. This was a huge wakeup call and I had one of two choices, either carry on or make a change, I'll let you guess which one I chose.

At 17.5 stone, a 40 a day smoker and heavy drinker, working 60 hours a week in a job I hated and covering up the fact I was gay, I decided to take the leap and come out.

This set in motion a series of events that would lead me to become the happy and healthy person I am today.



**"I vowed to take my experiences and turn them into something positive: The 401 Challenge was born."**



Sport for me was something I always avoided, never feeling as though I was good enough. Like many others I put up barriers and made excuses, mostly because I had no confidence.

At 30 I was convinced by a friend to join a local running club and from day one I found something that gave me a focus, a way to express myself and a way to help me manage and deal with my mental wellbeing. It became a lifeline for me and helped me deal with many of the issues from my past.

In 2015, after finally coming to terms with my past, I vowed to take my experiences and turn them into something positive. The 401 Challenge was born, a feat of endurance like no one had ever really seen before.

I set myself the goal of running 401 marathons in 401 days all around the UK, aiming to raise £250,000 for two anti bullying charities to help ensure young people didn't have to go through what I went through as a child. I sold my house and all my belongings and on 1st September 2015 I set off from Bristol on a mission that would inspire thousands to deal with their own pasts and question what is actually possible.

I'm happy to say the project was a huge success and on 5th October 2016 I crossed the finishing line in Bristol having achieved something most people thought was not humanly possible.

Raising over £330,000 for both Kidscape and Stonewall, I was awarded both the BBC Sports Personality of the Year Helen Rollason Award and National / Regional



**Clockwise from top left: The scenes as I completed the 401 Challenge in 2016; being presented with the BBC Helen Rollason and Pride of Britain awards.**

Pride of Britain Fundraiser of the Year Award in 2016.

The positive impact the project had had on people when it came to building their confidence and self esteem was the proudest achievement for me and in 2017 I set up The 401 Foundation, this is the legacy to the 401 Challenge and we are

only just getting started. As a registered charity, The 401 Foundation values the importance of mental wellbeing and aims to help people empower themselves and their local communities to build confidence, self esteem and promote positive mental health. We firmly believe everyone has the right to 'find their happy' and aim to provide support, empathy, and care so we can truly make a positive difference.

To help us raise necessary funds to ensure the sustainability of the charity for years to come, I have decided to undertake a second challenge. From a physical perspective it's a bigger challenge, but with that brings a chance to make an even bigger impact.

**That's where you come in...**

**Watch my story**  
courtesy of BBC Sport



# Your mission, if you choose to accept it, is...

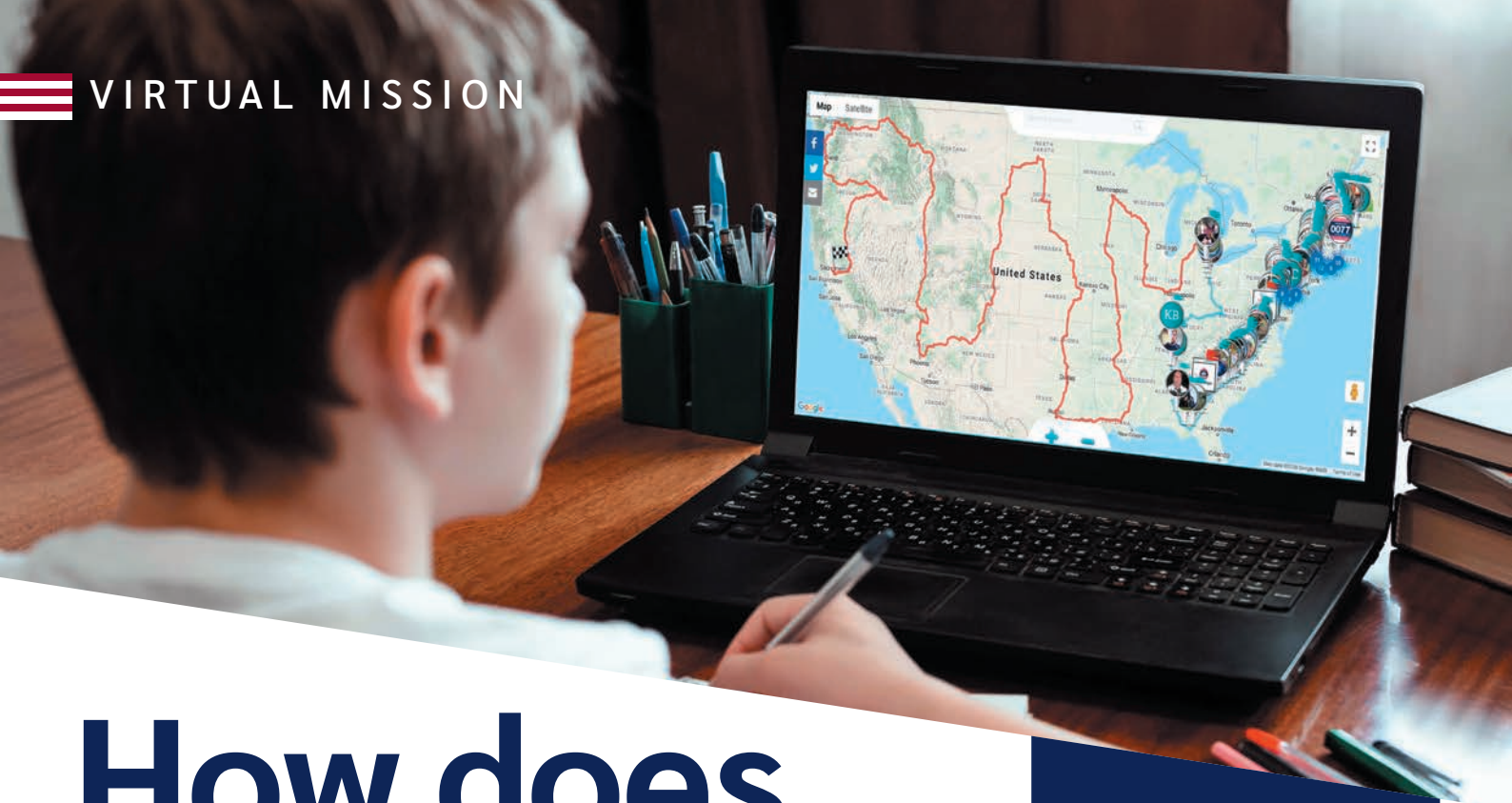


Working together as year groups, complete the official 14,000 mile USA Challenge route

- ★ Starting in September 2021, you have exactly one school year to complete your mission
- ★ Choose from over 100 different activities including running, walking, gardening, washing the car and even baking!
- ★ All activities are easily adaptable for all abilities
- ★ Build confidence, self esteem and improve mental wellbeing
- ★ Promote teamwork and community support
- ★ Break down personal barriers to physical activity
- ★ Easily links to all main curricular subjects
- ★ Be part of a movement that will deliver a fitter, healthier and happy generation for the future







# How does it work?

Using our support materials, easily record and upload your year group activities to a safe and secure online virtual platform.

- ★ This can be done daily, weekly or monthly
- ★ Each young person can track their own activities

## Google Street View ▼

Explore every inch of every state using the built in Google Street View feature



## Interactive map ▲

See the progress of year groups using our online interactive Virtual School Mission map


MISSION LEADERBOARD

See how everyone has been contributing to the mission.


Showing WEEKLY leaderboard of EVERYONES total distances.

GO TO TOP

GO TO ME



The 401 Primary School – Year 1




This week: 118.9 mi

All time: 3,912.1 mi

Type: 30 30 30

Completion: 30%




The 401 Primary School – Year 5

This week: 103.8 mi

All time: 3,938.6 mi

Type: 30 30

Completion: 30%




The 401 Primary School – Year 3

This week: 97.2 mi

All time: 1,900.5 mi

Type: 30 30 30 30

Completion: 14%



The 401 Primary School – Year 4

This week: 86.9 mi

All time: 3,960.1 mi

Type: 30 30

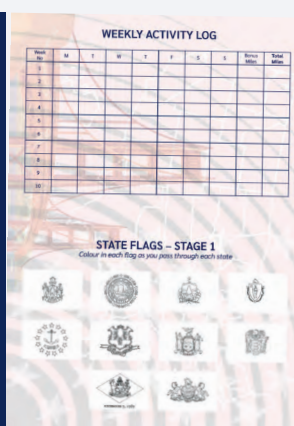
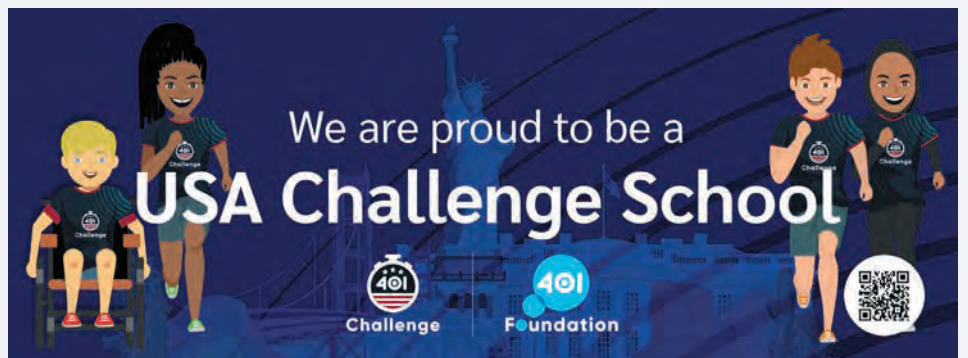
Completion: 30%

## Leaderboard ▲

Create a little competition using our interactive leaderboard facility

## A hand holding a blue circular button. The button features the 401 Challenge logo, which consists of a stylized stopwatch face with the number '401' inside, three stars above it, and three red stripes below it. Below the logo, the word 'Challenge' is written in white. The word 'ion' is partially visible at the bottom left of the page.







# Join me on my challenge

**W**e will be keeping the challenge alive with videos from me which you will also be sent.

These will cover things like:

- ★ Planning
- ★ Training
- ★ How I'm feeling
- ★ What challenges I'm facing
- ★ What's going well and what isn't
- ★ Day-to-day USA Challenge footage

These videos are designed to bring the USA Challenge to life and show your young people what a true journey to success looks like.







# Become one of our 401 Virtual Mission Schools

This is FREE programme for schools, so if you are interested then register below and our team will secure the funding from local businesses in your area.

We can't wait to inspire your young people and help them create memories that will last for a lifetime.

Anything is possible as long as you believe it is!

**Register your interest**

To register your interest **CLICK HERE** or visit  
**[www.the401foundation.co.uk/vsm](http://www.the401foundation.co.uk/vsm)**





Visit [www.the401foundation.co.uk/vsm](http://www.the401foundation.co.uk/vsm)  
to find out more and register today



Charity Number is 1175605