

UK

Head **for** Change



**The Big**  
*Rugby Swimathon*

**FUNDRAISING PACK**

[headforchange.org.uk](http://headforchange.org.uk)



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## WELCOME TO THE BIG RUGBY SWIMATHON

### Thank you for joining us!

Getting your goggles on and swimming the lengths will help to fundraise for Head for Change who aims to launch its education programme to promote brain health in rugby, to protect players and protect the game of rugby and continue their programmes in research and care and support.

As a small charity, we appreciate all the support we receive and every penny counts to our overall aims and objectives in making the sport we love safer.

We would love to hear how you get on and you can share your stories and photos on The Big Rugby Swim's own pages on Twitter, Facebook or Instagram @TheBigRugbySwim

If you have any questions, please do get in touch at: [hello@headforchange.org.uk](mailto:hello@headforchange.org.uk)



**Alix Popham**  
HEAD FOR CHANGE FOUNDER

## ABOUT HEAD FOR CHANGE



Head for Change is a start-up charitable foundation, pioneering positive change for brain health in sport and supporting ex-players who are affected by neurodegenerative disease as a result of their professional sporting career in rugby or football.

The charity was born after Alix Popham's diagnosis of early onset dementia and probable CTE in April 2020 with little support for 40 year olds and their families so Alix and Mel Bramwell-Popham decided to do something positive about the sport they still love but want to make safer.

The Big Rugby Swim brings together ex-professional rugby players in two teams (rugby union and rugby league) racing one another in relay teams across The English Channel.

[Read more about The Big Rugby Swim here](#)

## THE PURPOSE

Head for Change is determined to be part of the solution to increase awareness and educate to make a difference, not only for current players but also future players to make the sports we love safer.

The education programme that is due to launch in late 2023 aims to reach grassroots rugby in schools and clubs across the UK. This will take much planning and experienced ambassadors to deliver a programme that has gained much interest.

Positive change comes from raising awareness and educating all those in the sport we love.

## HOW FUNDRAISING WILL HELP

Raising this money will allow Head for Change to launch their education programme to promote brain health in rugby to protect players and protect the game of rugby and to continue our research programmes.

### Raising this money will allow the charity to:

- Launch an education programme to promote brain health in rugby to protect players and the game of rugby
- Continue our research programmes and traumatic brain injury research
- Continue to provide care and support for rugby families impacted.



**Carl Hayman**  
RETIRED ALL BLACK

## CARL HAYMAN'S STORY

The 1,000th All Black with 45 caps, Carl Hayman played around 450 rugby games over a professional career spanning 17 years. He is renowned for being one of the hardest men in world rugby.

In July 2021, at the age of 41, Carl was diagnosed with dementia and probable CTE, sadly much like Alix Popham's diagnosis he learnt of in April 2020.

Since Carl's diagnosis, Alix has been a great support to Carl and this is covered in his documentary.

[Watch this short documentary](#) to learn more about Carl's journey.

## WHAT TO DO NOW

1. Please reply to this email and provide your postal address and how many swimming caps you will need (up to 6 for a relay team) which will be sent to you as soon as possible.

2. Set your own target and send the following QR code to everyone you know and ask them to sponsor you for your Swimathon.

3. Remind your supporters to name you in their message on The Big Rugby Swim's JustGiving page so you can see how well you are doing as the pot for much needed funds grows as we all swim together:

[justgiving.com/campaign/TheBigRugbySwim](https://www.justgiving.com/campaign/TheBigRugbySwim)



4. Share your stories and photos (both in and out of the pool with your Swimathon cap on) on social media using the following hashtags and not forgetting to tag **@TheBigRugbySwim**

**Hashtags:** #HeadForChange #HeadForChangeRugby #HeadFirstIntoAction #BePartOfTheSolution #EnglishChannelSwim #TheBigRugbySwim #OpenWaterSwimming #RugbyLeague #RugbyUnion #RugbyFamily #CTE #SportsRelatedDementia



## WHAT TO DO NEXT

Whilst proudly wearing your Swimathon cap, swim the equivalent distance of 22 miles the ex-professional rugby players will do (depending on tides) as they race in rugby union vs rugby league teams across The English Channel between 7-12 October 2023.

Do this individually or as a team, choosing the timeframe you complete it in (a day, a week or the over the month of October).

### One final thing...

By signing up as a supporter and fundraiser for Head for Change, we shall add you to the mailing list to receive news on the education programme that you are raising money for as well as other events and programmes that Head for Change is organising.

We are always keen to hear from anyone that chooses to #BePartOfTheSolution and if you would like to help support Head for Change further, please get in touch at: [hello@headforchange.org.uk](mailto:hello@headforchange.org.uk)



# Head **for** Change.

Be part of the solution

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