



End mental health
discrimination

PRESS RELEASE

PICS

For Immediate Release

Oban Walking to Tackle Stigma

OBAN is set to host its first major walk, to help change the way people think about mental health.

The Walk a Mile event is being arranged by Des Macmillan, a Community Champion for the national programme to end mental health discrimination, See Me.

The aim of the event, on May 20, is to show that mental health can be a topic of everyday conversations, and we are all responsible for creating positive attitudes around it.

So far thousands of people have taken part in Walks across Scotland, bringing together health professionals, carers, people with lived experience of mental health problems, students, or anyone who cares about tackling mental health discrimination, to break down barriers as they walk a mile in each other's shoes.

However this event will go even further, as Des, together with Tina Jordan from ACUMEN are putting on a day of events in the town, while even doing the first ever two mile walk. Music will be provided at Station Square and guest speakers will be talking about their stories after the walk.

Des, who is from Oban, said: "We have put together a day which will give the people of Oban a better insight to the effects of mental health problems.

"We have not had an opportunity before to show that Oban will take a stand and go that extra mile to challenge the stigma and discrimination associated with mental health.

"There are people all around us who are coping with some sort of mental illness. Yet, we, as a society, choose to silence them.

"It's time for us, as a community, to stop putting our hands over our ears and start listening. You will find that someone you know lots of people who have experienced a mental illness, and their story needs to be heard.

“For me it took years to understand my mental health but it was only when I opened up to the outside world then I really truly started to accept my illness and start my road to recovery.”

Calum Irving, See Me director, said: “Mental health affects all of us, but there is still a stigma around it. To tackle this properly people need to understand that it is okay not to be okay.

“One of the best ways to change how people think and behave is to make mental health a topic in day to day conversation, rather than a taboo subject people don’t want to talk about.”

The Walk will begin at 12pm at the Station Road, Oban PA34 4LW. To find out more contact Des.Macmillan@seemechampion.org or visit www.seemescotland.org.

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NOTES TO EDITORS

1. See Me is Scotland’s National programme to end mental health stigma and discrimination, enabling people who experience mental health problems to live fulfilled lives.

We do this by:

- Mobilising people to work together and lead a movement to end mental health stigma and discrimination
 - Working with people to change negative behaviour towards those with mental health problems
 - Ensuring that the human rights of people with mental health problems are respected and upheld
2. Follow See Me on Twitter @seemescotland or find us on Facebook: Facebook/seemescotland, <http://seemescotland.tumblr.com/>, <https://medium.com/@seemescotland>, or at www.seemescotland.org
 3. See Me is managed by SAMH and the Mental Health Foundation and funded by Scottish Government and Comic Relief

4. We work in partnerships with VOX, the Scottish Mental Health Cooperative and the Scottish Mental Health Arts and Film Festival to bring about a meaningful change in behaviours.

