

# Otford's fab four cyclists

## Boys raise £1,500 for leukaemia charity

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FOUR Year 6 children from Otford Primary School have raised more than £1,500 for a charity that helped a pal with leukaemia.

Lewis Balcombe, Elliott Chandler, Sam Gaskin and Sam Thompson completed a gruelling 13-mile off-road sponsored charity bike ride in aid of the Emily Ash Trust, a charity which sponsors children with cancer and their families.

The children decided to raise the money because of the support it provided for leukaemia sufferer Ellis Andrews, of Pilgrims Way East, and his family.

Lewis, Elliott and the two Sams, calling themselves "the Otford Four" after the superhero movie characters, know Ellis because they play football with his brother Robert for Otford Youth.

Paul Gaskin, one of the school's governors and Sam Gaskin's father, said: "Ellis is a complete fight-



**RIDE:** Ellis Andrews, centre, with Robbie Earle, back, and The Otford Four

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er and at the moment we are looking at a boy who is currently in remission."

Last month the boys fastened their cycling helmets and put on their gloves to brace the weather.

The whole of the Andrews family, as well as two members of the Trust and classmates, watched

them ride into the distance.

Accompanied by some of their parents, the lads took three-and-a-half hours to complete their task and were welcomed home by a banner held up by Ellis.

It said: "Congratulations to the Otford Four. More Superpowers than the Fantastic Four".

Ten-year-old Elliott said the hardest part was "most definitely cycling along Fackenden Lane in the pouring rain".

The boys handed their cheque for more than £1,500 to the charity on Monday last week at an assembly presided over by ex-Wimbledon footballer and TV personality Robbie Earle, who is also patron of the Emily Ash Trust.

Handing them a medal, certificate and Easter egg from the charity, the sportsman said to the other children: "These young boys are four big heroes for me."

He added: "It was excellent that they had taken the time out to unite the school, identify a charity and to help others."