

Bristol man part of first attempt at carbon-neutral Greenland crossing

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A Bristol physiotherapist is aiming to cross the ice caps of Greenland – using the least amount of fuel possible.

Richard Spink will be attempting to make the first carbon-neutral crossing of the ice with his colleague Raoul Surcouf, of West London.

Rather than flying to the ice cap, the pair will sail 4,500 miles from Plymouth in a boat skippered by fellow Bristolian Ben Stoddart as they attempt to make a minimal impact on the environment.

Mr Spink, 31, and Mr Surcouf, 40, will then trek about 600 miles across the Greenland ice cap from Nuuk, while Mr Stoddart, 43, of Montpelier will continue sailing up the Western coast to Disco Bay.

The pair making their way across the ice will start their trek with rucksacks weighing about 100kg each, including about 50kg of food.

The duo, who set off in a week, will be carrying out research for the Bristol Glaciology Centre during their trip and will also be in contact with thousands of school children as part of an education project.

Mr Spink, of Cotham Park, Cotham, said: "We felt that having been to these quite endangered and fragile environments, it was almost hypocritical to continue exploring up there by having a carbon footprint, using fossil fuels.

"We thought the only responsible way would be to travel by sail or manpower.

"Education is a really big part of what we are doing and about 20,000 pupils will be following our expedition.

"We will be phoning schools up and speaking to them from the ice and updating them about where we are."

It has taken three years to plan, but during that time the team has visited about 6,000 pupils at schools and explaining what they will be doing and its impact on the environment.

They visited pupils at St Mary Redcliffe and Temple School on Friday to explain the reasons behind their trip and steps the youngsters can take to reduce their own carbon footprints as part of a 40-day challenge.

For more information on the trek and to keep up to date with their progress visit www.carbonneutralexpeditions.com.



Richard Spink with St Mary Redcliffe pupils