

Charity News 2020

As 2020 came to a close we may have looked back on a year of loss and enormous disruption to our daily lives. But one thing did remain constant – the ability of the Sporting Bears to raise money for children’s charities; there is much to celebrate!

The New Year was set fair with the ever popular Isle of Wight Panto Ride event for families from the Joe Ellis Trust, a local charity that supports Island children fighting cancer; this year it was Sleeping Beauty.



A Shire’s Tour of the Aston Martin factory in Banbury raised £580 for Dogs for Good. This included a donation of £180 and individual donations totalling £400 from which the charity could claim Gift Aid.

Both events were held in February before we all learnt new words like “lockdown” and “furlough”!

At the end of every year the Treasurer releases funds from the General Account into the Charity Account. In 2019 we were fortunate to have £7,500 to donate to 15 charities. These donations went to some well-loved and also some new charities as is our usual custom.

Two of the new charities we supported in this way were: **Unique Kidz and Co Morecambe** was set up by two mums, Denise and Jane, who were unable to find suitable childcare for their own disabled children. They were nominated by Grizzly Bear (Paul Bonsall) for the Magnificent Seven(th) Gambol which was due to be held in May last year. As two mums of disabled children, they’ve always known that one size doesn’t fit all. Everyone is unique. Unable to find anywhere that catered to their children’s specific needs, they decided to set something up themselves.



is a safe place for children to meet, make friends, experience new things and be themselves.

The Seven(th) Gambol will now take place in July 2021, Covid rules permitting.



Kilton Thorpe Specialist Academy in Saltburn-by-the-Sea is a special, state funded junior & senior school for children from the Redcar and Cleveland local authority as well as surrounding boroughs.

A multi-disciplinary team, which includes specially trained staff in nursing, physiotherapy, occupational therapy and speech therapy, work closely alongside our school staff to ensure that pupils make the progress they are able to make.

New charities the Club has agreed to support in 2020

DASH Ceredigion was nominated for the Cymru Canter in 2020. They have been organising a variety of leisure schemes for disabled children and young people within the county of Ceredigion (Cardiganshire – in old money!) since 1978.

Local disabled children and their families are now able to have a better quality of life with access to a wide choice of leisure facilities and opportunities.



DASH wants to make sure that disabled children have the same choice about what to do in their leisure time as other children do.

The Cymru Canter is now planned for September this year.

Northamptonshire Health Charity supports the community hospitals within Northamptonshire as well as Northampton General Hospital and has been set up to provide the added “extras” above and beyond that which the NHS can provide. The children cared for on the ward can be from a few months old, up until the age of 18. They also support the mental health adolescent wards in the community hospitals; the age range there is 11-18.



Facilities they provide include:

- 🍃 Distraction equipment when children are having tests done such as injections/taking blood
- 🍃 Backpacks for children to wear that holds their ECG monitoring equipment
- 🍃 Sensory amenities for children with learning or development difficulties

HEART LINK (East Midlands Children’s Heart Care Association)

is based in, Leicester. They raise money through various “appeals” to support the hospital and one of their most notable achievements was the setting up of a pioneering technique in 1989 known as E.C.M.O (Extra Corporeal Membrane Oxygenation) a modern invasive life-support system which can be used on patients with severe respiratory/cardiac failure.



I’m sure you’ve heard of this procedure during the pandemic in the last 12 months where it has been used to great effect for patients with Covid 19.

Today there are still only four E.C.M.O centres in the whole country and they are proud to say that Glenfield is able to undertake this treatment on new born babies and children as well as adults.



“The welcome arms for those seeking information, training and support around Autism”
Charity number – 1180998

Enfold support the autistic community of Northamptonshire. They address the issues of isolation and lack of information by acting as system navigators ensuring better support, better communication and connecting people to the right support.

Caudwell Children is a national charity based in Staffordshire and is dedicated to improving the lives of disabled children in the UK.

Their vision is a world where all disabled children and their families have choice, opportunity, dignity and understanding by providing practical and emotional support through compassionate and efficient services, by doing “Whatever It Takes!”





HOPE Epilepsy London is dedicated to supporting families and children that have been affected by Epilepsy. Epilepsy can have a devastating impact on a family. HOPE London provides a safe space for families to socialise, reduce isolation and build relationships.

Ollie was born with Alternating Hemiplegia of Childhood, meaning any muscle in his body can become paralysed at any time. Ollie is a happy, cheeky boy who smiles constantly, loves people and loves life and enjoys special time at Naomi House



Little Isabella has chronic lung disease and fights for every breath. She needs a constant supply of oxygen in heavy bottles so going anywhere is a struggle. She and her single Mum clearly enjoy their time spent at Julia's House.

Towards the end of last year members from the Polar Region made individual donations to the four charities they had hoped to support at events in 2020. As these were individual donations the charities were able to claim Gift Aid on the £360 sent to each of them.

Borders Children's Charity were delighted to visit the basket swing they provided for the children at Leader Valley Primary School in Earlston and to hear how much the children love it, racing towards it every break time!



Smile for Life's Café Beam, a beautiful café/bistro provides essential work experience placements and is run by a team of young people with a variety of disabilities and learning difficulties.

In response to the current crisis the Clown Doctors have developed a new programme of virtual visits that continue to spread joy and laughter and provide that much needed human connection.



James Rennie School wanted to share something positive and wonderful; their KS4 Frame Group performed the Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe before sadly having to close due to Covid19 pressures. Hopefully it won't be long now until a full public performance can be held

NEC Classic Car Show Online Edition

While the Lancaster Insurance Classic Motor Show, couldn't happen in its usual format with the community together at the NEC last November, they still managed to celebrate the cars, the people, the clubs and companies that make it such a great season finale with their Online Edition. We supported eight children's hospices and hospitals and raised an incredible £47, 000!

Here are just three of the children you have supported last year:



at Rainbows Evelyn enjoys time with friends. She was just eight months old when she had a cardiac arrest at home, leaving her brain starved of oxygen and resulting in damage which has changed her life.

Charity of the Year 2020 Dogs for Good

At the end of 2019 the Treasurer set up a "Just Giving" page on the Club website. The Committee decided that this page would support a charity for the year nominated by each Region in turn.

In 2020 the Charity of the Year was Dogs for Good nominated by the Shire Bears.

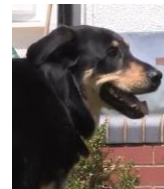
They were the first charity in the UK to train assistance dogs for children with physical disabilities in 2004 resulting in life-changing differences for those children. Assistance dogs can help build a level of independence and confidence; they also offer unconditional love, becoming a friend who is always there for them, and a positive focus for the whole family. A recognised assistance dog provides an extension of the person's abilities, and is allowed by law to accompany their partner into public places such as shops, restaurants and also to travel on public transport.

Just like any ten year old, Elliot is determined to be more independent as he grows older. However Elliot has physical disabilities and has already faced more challenges in his young life than many will in a life-time.



Elmo, a cheeky cockerpool, bounded into Elliot's life at the end of 2019; he's made Elliot laugh and they love being together. Elmo is always ready to help, he can't wait to take off Elliot's shoes or pick something up for him. He's just what Elliot needed and even though they've only been together for a year, it's obvious that Elliot feels more positive about his future and that he can do things for himself so he's less frustrated.

Before Scoobie Grace wouldn't leave the home and was physically and verbally abusive.



Scoobie calmed her down and as she didn't want to upset him there were very few tantrums after his arrival. Before she never got out of her wheelchair, now she not only paddles in the river but helps Scoobie find pebbles and life is special and fun.



buddy bag foundation

And finally....



A Buddy Bag is a backpack that contains all the essential items a child needs when they enter emergency care after fleeing violent situations at home. They include toiletries, pyjamas, socks and underwear. They also include comfort items such as a book, a photo frame and a teddy bear. A Buddy Bag is something a child can call their own, no matter where they go. Sadly they have now passed 30.000 Buddy Bags.

Karen Williams - Buddy Bags Founder was awarded an OBE in the New Year's Honours list for services to the victims of domestic abuse.

Following the AGM in March 2021 one of our members, Sarah Forbes, wrote to tell me that during lockdown she and her mother Valerie have been creative with the knitting needles in 2020 and completed a range of teddy bears to donate to the Buddy Bag Foundation. If you wish to help, teddy bear patterns can be found under "How can I help?" on their website www.buddybagfoundation.co.uk, they also have a Love Lego Appeal.



A joyful celebration to start 2021!

So how did we raise money in lockdown with no events to put on?



Some Regions held a virtual Quiz night,



F1 memorabilia was auctioned, and



Nick Whale, of Silverstone Auctions, so very generously donated the Rover Mini Cooper for auction at the NEC and it exceeded its estimate of £12 – 15,000, raising £22,000!

With so many people's lives turned upside down by the pandemic or on indefinite pause, it can feel like good news was in short supply last year. I hope this article has proved that despite it all the Bears are a force to be reckoned with (over £58,000 worth to be precise) and not even a global pandemic will prevent us from supporting all the wonderful staff and beautiful children who need our help.

Caroline McSean, Charity Secretary