



*The Huw Thatcher Trust:  
Remembering Huw: fundraising  
on behalf of the Brain Injury  
Rehabilitation Trust, part of the  
Disabilities Trust registered  
charity no. 800797*

## The Huw Thatcher Trust – Annual Report 2013



**BIRT**  
Brain Injury  
Rehabilitation Trust



The Disabilities Trust

## REFLECTIONS ON 2013

By the end of 2013 the Huw Thatcher Trust had raised a total of £91,000 – of that total £45,000 was raised in 2011, £25,000 in 2012, and £21,000 in 2013. Annual reports for each of the three years are available on Huw's web site and [can be accessed at this link here.](#)

It means a lot that the Trust continued so actively as a tribute to Huw in 2013. Not only has the fund-raising far exceeded expectations, but people have put lots of personal time and effort, into the Trust. Friends and family have continued to be inspired to take on challenges, initiate events, and raise funds. This report tells you about some of the stories from the Huw Thatcher Trust in 2013, but first I want to say something about the following words that I came across during the year:

*'Your son will hold your hand for only a little while'*

*But he will hold your heart for a lifetime'*

Huw will hold his parents' hearts for the rest of our lives and he holds the hearts of so many other people too. But the words above are written to reflect parents of older sons, who have grown up and no longer need a parent's hand. The words are therefore a reminder that Huw didn't have the chance to experience adult life (or even all of his life as a teenager). Huw didn't have the exciting opportunities that most of us have had. We didn't have the chance to experience so many exciting parts of life with Huw.

It is this which must make us grateful for the opportunities that we do have in our lives, and which may inspire some of us to continue supporting the Huw Thatcher Trust.

Huw was a smart, engaging, considerate, talented, and funny young guy and we hope that the Huw Thatcher Trust reflects these aspects of his personality. I can't predict exactly what direction the Huw Thatcher Trust will take in 2014, but I hope it will enable people to have a lot of fun, remember their friend or family member Huw, and raise some funds to help those who have experienced brain injury.

Further information about the Trust, the fund raising events, and lots of lovely memories of Huw can be found on Huw's website – [www.huwthatchertrust.org](http://www.huwthatchertrust.org)

There's also a Facebook group which is updated regularly with Trust news and reflections about Huw [at this link.](#)

I hope you find this report interesting and inspiring.

Nick Thatcher, January 2014

## WHAT IS THE HUW THATCHER TRUST?

Since April 2011, the Huw Thatcher Trust has been a way for hundreds of us to show love and respect for Huw. Doing something positive and raising funds to help brain injured people has been a great comfort, against a backdrop of sadness about what happened nearly 3 years ago.

The Huw Thatcher Trust is a fund within a national charity called the Brain Injury Rehabilitation Trust (BIRT). The Thatcher family and BIRT agree how the money will be spent, and this arrangement has the benefits of a registered charity but avoids the added administration costs. While BIRT is able to offer a fantastic rehabilitation for people with brain injuries, there are things they can't afford. The Huw Thatcher Trust has helped BIRT provide some of these things - like physiotherapy equipment, and facilities for IT, garden areas, and kitchens.

Barrie Oldham the Chief Executive says:

*"I would like to record my sincere thanks to Huw's family and friends for their continuing support - in particular the young people of Huw's age who have been so generous with their time and efforts. This has allowed us to provide extra facilities for the people we support. We look forward to seeing new facilities funded by the Huw Thatcher Trust in use at our existing service at Goole in Yorkshire, and our new centre at Llanelli in South Wales, very soon."*



**Huw enjoying himself at New Year early in 2011**

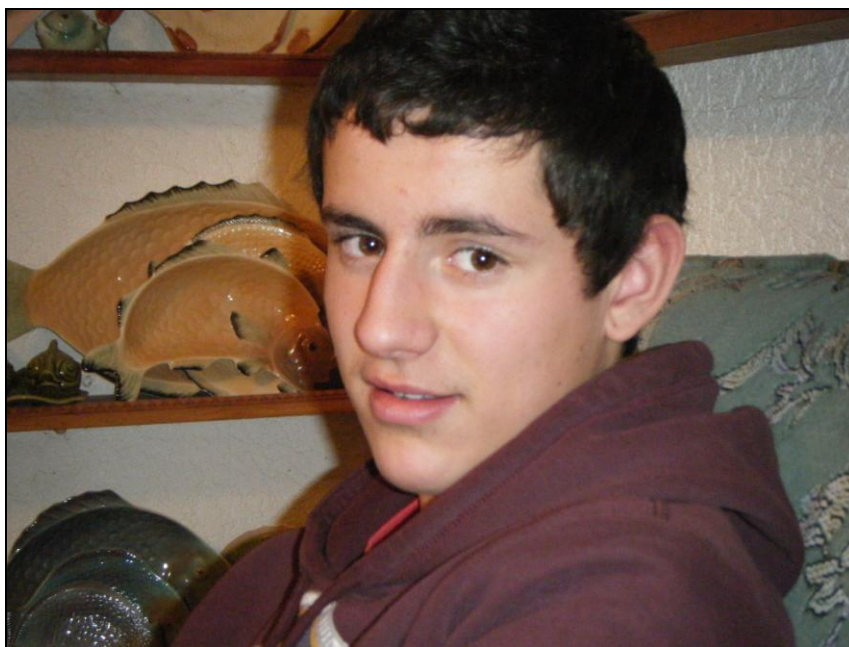
## HUW THATCHER, BORN 25<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 1995

Huw left us at the age of 15 years and 4 months on March 13th 2011, playing in a football match for Hepworth United near his home town of Holmfirth. Huw had a brain haemorrhage as a result of an existing condition that no one knew about, or could have known about. He was an amazing young guy with everything going for him - playful, sensitive, smart, tall, handsome, and very funny. But Huw always had time to talk, and develop friendships with adults, with his own age group, and also with younger children.

Sport was a big part of Huw's life – he played for Hepworth United in football, Upperthong at cricket, and was a member of Thongsbridge Tennis Club. Huw had lots of other interests and aspects to his personality. He loved music, being a comedian, and most of all being a friend. Huw was a natural entertainer, but at the same time perceptive, and sensitive. Huw was getting excellent academic results, was ready to take his Grade 5 exam on the drum kit, and had planned to go to university. Huw was a free spirit with a beautiful smile, who is a sadly missed and much loved son, brother, grandson, cousin, nephew and friend.



In September 2013, we discovered the beautiful photo below for the first time, which was taken in December 2010. Huw had just celebrated his 15<sup>th</sup> birthday with the rest of his life ahead of him.



## FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Funds were raised from the following events in 2013. Behind the amounts listed below are hundreds of donations from hundreds of kind people. It has not been possible to list every single thing but here are the main events.

24<sup>th</sup> February – Blackpool half marathon; Huw’s friends and Nick

2<sup>nd</sup> March – Dodgeball night at Holmfirth High School; Ben Sykes

7<sup>th</sup> July – Upperthong Cricket Club three masts cycle challenge

13<sup>th</sup> July – Gig at the Picturedrome with Age of Paranoia and Hiding from Olive

20<sup>th</sup> July - five a side football tournament

24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> August – canoeing and running challenge Manchester to Huddersfield

12<sup>th</sup> October – sponsored walk; organised by Will Clowes

24<sup>th</sup> November – Conwy half marathon; friends and Nick

15<sup>th</sup> December – Karate charity challenge; Holme Valley Karate and Judo Academy

Throughout 2013 there were various other events too including cake sales and raffles. There have also been donations from individual people as well as local organisations. Thank you messages have been given to all known contributors so we have not listed them all here. But suffice to say, a heartfelt thank you to everyone who has made a donation, baked a cake for an event, donated an item for auction or a raffle, or contributed to an event in some other way.

Each contribution has been received as a demonstration of love for Huw, and care for people who need support.

**Total raised in 2013**

**£21,000**

## THE MAIN EVENTS FROM 2013

Blackpool half marathon on 24<sup>th</sup> February and the Dodgeball night on 2<sup>nd</sup> March

Late in 2012 a friend of Huw's (Ben Sykes) contacted me to ask if he could raise funds for the Huw Thatcher Trust by running the Blackpool half marathon the following February? I was touched by this approach, including the respectful manner with which Ben approached me – just like all of Huw's friends who are so respectful of Huw. This initial idea (due to the efforts of Ben and other friends of Huw) mushroomed so that 5 people ended up running the half marathon (including me) and Ben also ended up organising a Dodgeball night shortly afterwards. Myself, Ben, Mackie, Rose and Andy loved running for Huw in February, as much as the 100 plus young people enjoyed the Dodgeball a few weeks later. Both events saw a fantastic spirit – the runners supporting and encouraging each other throughout the event and each achieving notable personal goals. And the Dodgeball event saw a large group of young people having fun – but very much aware that they were together that night for the Huw Thatcher Trust – remembering a much loved old friend. It was a pleasure doing these events with Ben in 2013 and I was delighted that he also joined us in the Conwy half marathon later in the year. Well done Ben, I'll miss you in 2014 – a proper gentleman.



**The five runners lining up before the Blackpool half marathon – we didn't look as relaxed as this a few hours later**



**The Dodgeball was a lot of fun and along with the Blackpool half marathon, raised many hundreds of pounds**

#### Upperthong Cricket Club three masts cycle challenge

On 7<sup>th</sup> July, 40 cyclists young, old and every age in between, set out on a really tough cycle challenge covering 55 miles in temperatures that reached the late 20s. In a change to the route of the previous 2 years Joy Oakley planned a ride that took in the 3 TV masts – each of which sits on top of a hill. First off was the Holme Moss mast which sits at the top of the one climb classed as a mountain in the UK leg of the Tour de France route for 2014. While we climbed it at a fraction of the speed the Tour riders will be, it was a great effort for us all to get to the summit within 5 miles of the start, despite a number of early mechanical problems. Next was Emley Moor and then after 45 miles we reached the top of Pole Moor. There was no let up with the climbing however in the last 10 miles - so the event definitely lived up to its description as a 'cycle challenge'. A special mention to Paul France who completed the route with a very early start on his own so he could finish early to watch his son play cricket and to Russ Briggs who having taken up cycling earlier in the year with the Challenge as a target, unfortunately broke his collar bone a few weeks before.....in training! Thank you so much to everyone at the Cricket Club, particularly Joy for a great day which also raised a good few hundred pounds for the Trust.



**The cyclists before the hardest Huw Thatcher cricket cycle challenge to date; we were too tired to manage any photos afterwards.....**





13<sup>th</sup> July – Gig at the Picturedrome with Age of Paranoia and Hiding from Olive

500 people showed up once again for a lively July night at the Holmfirth Picturedrome in the third and final event of its type. Local punk group Age of Paranoia were more than capably supported by Hiding from Olive (a band made up of Huw's friends) to make it another night to remember. Other charities and causes will rightly have the opportunity to use the Picturedrome in future years so this was the last of the Huw gigs but we have had 3 superb events. And this time we were delighted to provide the takings to Richard Ford and his family to help with his needs as a result of a recent disability. Many thanks again to Peter Carr at the Picturedrome, the bands, Dave Brennan (the organiser), and the ticket sellers, for their time and commitment. The Picturedrome was lit up on 13<sup>th</sup> July by 2 of Holmfirth's best - one down here fighting back and the other up there shining down - like he will forever ♥♥♥



**'Age of Paranoia' in action in front of 500 people - and Hiding from Olive below**



## 20<sup>th</sup> July - five a side football tournament

The third Huw Thatcher five a side football tournament was every bit as good as the previous two. It's an amazing event and will take place once again in 2014. The event has attracted players of all ages in each of the 3 years and all the age group competitions were keenly contested, and played in a great spirit. The late evening session in 2013 rounded off the day with some great football and a group of 120 players and spectators enjoying each other's company as well as the football and of course the cake stall! Spending the evening with so many of Huw's friends from his age group was a perfect Saturday night, which resulted in over £1,000 being raised. There was a special feel at Holmfirth High that Saturday night – all of us conscious of why we were there. The spirit of Huw was very much with us in the school sports hall where he had so much fun over the years. Thank you to Isaac and Joel Ezro and Ed Clowes for the organisation and everyone else for helping out and taking part.



**The generous contributions for the cake stall were much appreciated by the footballers and spectators, especially these cakes with HT icing on them.**

**Below - it was appropriate that the Bluebirds won the evening session – a team started by Huw for 'Samba football' in 2011**



24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> August – canoeing and running challenge Manchester to Huddersfield, and 12<sup>th</sup> October sponsored walk

At the end of August, John Field (aka Bambi), Jason Brooke, and Abbie Iggleden raised £1,500 which they split between Cancer Research and the Huw Thatcher Trust. The canoeing and running challenge over the August bank holiday weekend was a test for all us although I was unable to play a full part due to a back injury. The other 3 completed the course in style, including a capsize on Jason's part which was the highlight of the weekend for John and Abbie! The back injury didn't however prevent me from taking part in a sponsored walk on 12<sup>th</sup> October. Organised by Huw's football team mate Will Clowes, the walk was a great achievement by everyone who completed the 25 miles in continuous heavy rain. The prize went to Amy who completed it in a pair of Vans (lightweight branded daps for the uninitiated) but well done to everyone – by the end I felt just about the wettest and most tired I have ever been.



**Bambi (pictured in the red life jacket) first met Huw when he turned up to his first Hepworth training session aged 6 in a full Cardiff City strip**



24<sup>th</sup> November – Conwy half marathon

The day before Huw's 18<sup>th</sup> birthday, Tom Dixon, Kevin Girdlestone, Michelle Briggs, Steve Harris, George Richardson, Ben Sykes, Danny Watson, Phil Brown and myself completed the Conwy half marathon. Most of the runners were completing the 13 mile distance for the first time and all achieved personal goals. It was a poignant day as we completed the course in the beautiful North Wales scenery running through Llandudno where Huw and the family had enjoyed a lovely holiday away a few years ago.



**Ready to go (above) in unmistakable bright orange Huw shirts at Conwy. A day of sadness, togetherness, support, achievement, and determination. Well done to all the runners.**

**Also pictured - me achieving a personal promise for Huw that I didn't quite manage at Conwy - completing the Bedford half marathon a couple of weeks later on my own – but breaking the 2 hour mark. That was just for you Huw and with all my love.**

## 15<sup>th</sup> December – Karate charity challenge; Holme Valley Karate and Judo Academy

The third event put on by Tony Sykes at the karate and judo academy was a lovely way to round off the year. Tony remembers Huw from karate lessons when he was a little boy, and the event involved young people from Huddersfield and Wakefield in a series of keenly contested bouts. Tracey Hawley once again organised a fantastic cake stall and there was a surprise raffle thanks to the very kind lady who arrived with a prize and a book of raffle tickets! Many thanks to Tony, Tracey, the young people, and everyone who paid for their entry tickets, supported the raffle, and bought something to eat.



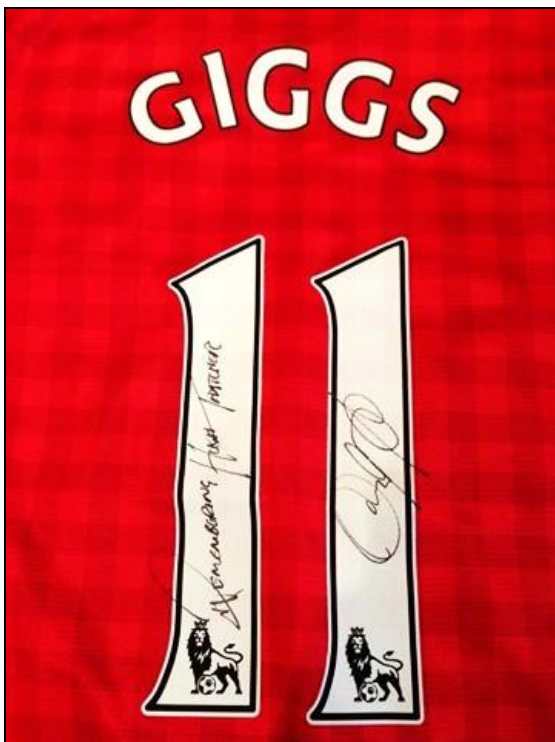
### Other events and donations

There was a whole lot more that happened during 2013 – events, donations and a great many memories of Huw. A notable day was the Huddersfield Examiner Awards in May, when the Trust won the Charity of the Year Award. It was an honour that Huw was recognised in this way and a pleasure to spend the evening with a group of his friends.

**Pictured overleaf; Huw's friends with the prestigious Charity of the Year Award**



Another important day early in the year involved 10 of us walking from Huw's bench at Digley to Huddersfield Town's ground to watch Town take on Cardiff City. It was a superb idea and a morale boosting day despite the struggles involved in walking 10 miles in the cold, up and down several hills....all done with unsuitable footwear! Tom Dixon (the organiser), Rod Young, Carys, myself, and a group of Huw's friends made it to the ground with just 15 minutes to spare. We were glad to have 90 minutes to sit down and recover, despite the drab entertainment as the clubs played out a 0-0 draw.

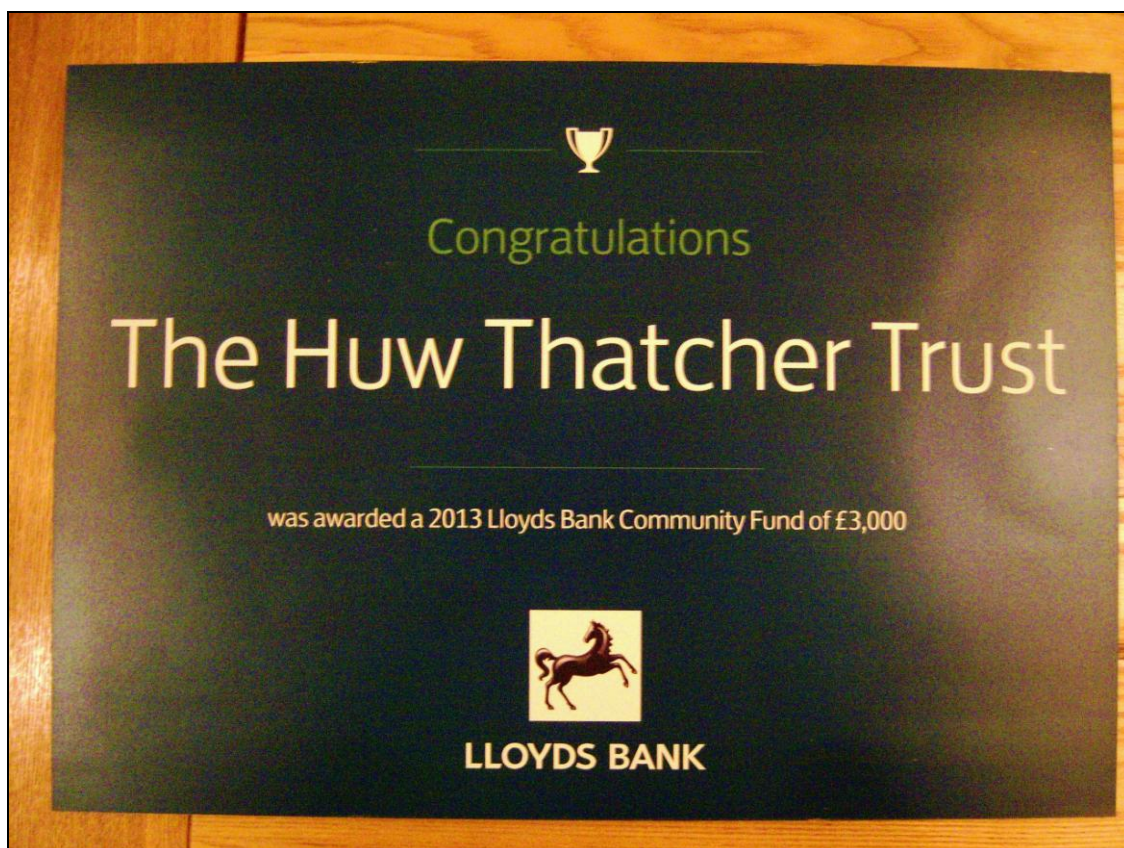


On the fund raising front a non uniform day held at Holmfirth High School in March raised £500, and the Upperthong Cricket Club raffle held in the summer was successful as usual; the main prize was a signed Ryan Giggs shirt pictured here, and kindly donated by an employee of BIRT.

Huw's Aunty (Fran) completed a 10k run in November which following a year of various injuries was a great effort, in which she raised a good amount in sponsorship. Others in Huw's family continued to support the Trust during the year by taking part in events, making donations and sponsoring others – family are the most important – and all of these donations to respect the 15 year old they loved so much are greatly appreciated.

Early in 2013, the Trust also received a donation of £450 from monies donated following the funeral of Ron Briggs, a grandparent of one of Huw's close friends, Sam. We were very touched that Edna Briggs chose the Huw Thatcher Trust for donations, and along with our condolences, we send our thanks to the family and all those who contributed.

Finally, there were two other donations during 2013 I want to mention, including the donation of materials for the garden at Osman House (a facility in Leeds for brain injury rehabilitation) - thank you to Chris Churm for initiating this donation from his employer, Marshalls Landscaping. The other was from the Lloyds TSB Community Fund, which was the result of a nomination by Anne (mother of one of Huw's oldest friends) and a public vote. The Huw Thatcher Trust has been successful in every vote it has been involved in, over a period of 3 years including a Yorkshire Children of Courage Award, votes for donations by the Yorkshire Building Society and Lloyds TSB, and the Huddersfield Examiner Charity of the Year Award. Unfortunately as a result there were other wonderful causes that didn't win awards, but they will get a chance in future years and the awards the Huw Thatcher Trust has received, reflect the high esteem in which Huw is held.....how could anyone not vote for Huw?



## HOW THE FUNDS ARE BEING USED

### Income 2011-2013

£91,000

### Expenditure

Richard Ford Trust	-	£3,000
Skate for Isaac	-	£200
Payment in kind to BIRT (garden materials)	-	£2,000
BIRT cash expenditure	-	£85,800
<b>Total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>£91,000</b>

We were pleased to pass £3,000 to Richard Ford and his family in 2013; the family used the money to pay for wheelchair ramps to be installed. Richard was a coach with Huw's football club, Hepworth United. Richard suffered a brain injury as a result of a serious stroke in June 2012 and as a result is now a wheel chair user.

We were also pleased to donate £200 to Skate for Isaac; a project to provide a Skate Park in Holmfirth in memory of 14 year old Isaac Atkinson. We plan to make a similar donation in 2014.

I realise that economic times are tough so the donations are particularly appreciated. The money raised is being spent very wisely and the detail of the BIRT expenditure of £85,800 is shown overleaf.

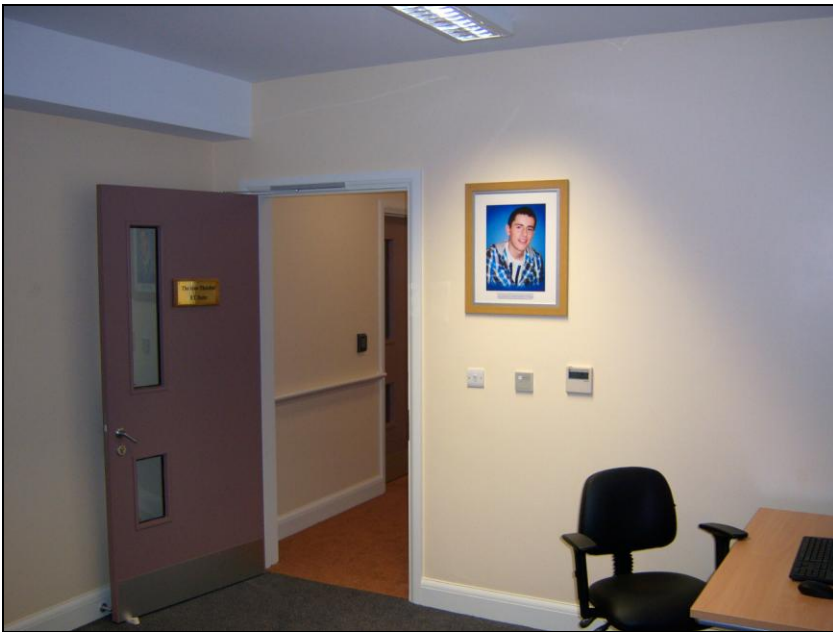


## BIRT cash expenditure

Item	Cost (£)
<b>Eyes Alight Appeal</b>	£10,000
<b>Daniel Yorath House – Leeds</b>	
Internet cafe and equipment	£7,000
Bikes etc	£1,000
<b>Osman House – Leeds</b>	
Garden	£5000
<b>Heathermount – Berkshire</b>	
Musical equipment for young people	£400
<b>Chalkdown House – Swindon</b>	
OT Kitchen	£1,581
Garden	£3,088
IT suite	£15,551
Physiotherapy equipment	£8,661
<b>New residential rehabilitation service at Llanelli</b>	
IT facilities	£14,189
Garden	£3,088
OT Kitchen	£1,581
Physiotherapy equipment	£8,661
<b>Goole neuro rehabilitation centre</b>	
2 Laptops	£1,000
Physiotherapy equipment	£5,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>£85,800</b>

## A LASTING TRIBUTE TO HUW

The Huw Thatcher Trust and what it has achieved is a lasting tribute to Huw. Having mainly supported facilities in Yorkshire so far, there was an opportunity for the Trust to provide IT and other facilities at Chalkdown House in Swindon. Chalkdown House provides rehabilitation support for people who have received brain injuries through medical reasons or via other injury (e.g. by being in the armed forces). The Huw Thatcher IT Suite at Swindon is one of the benefits provided by the Huw Thatcher Trust and seeing these facilities in action at the opening of Chalkdown House was inspiring, but also very sad.



The Huw Thatcher Trust is featured on the BIRT web site [at this link](#), and the article shows just how much the Trust means to BIRT.

## PLANS FOR 2014

As I've said before there has never been any target for the Huw Thatcher Trust. No one should feel under pressure to sponsor anyone, or take part in events - people may have other charities that are close to their hearts. Having said that, if anyone would like to do something for the Trust, please do get in touch.

As time passes and particularly when many of Huw's friends move away to go to University etc, the number of things happening as part of the Trust will inevitably reduce. But every donation or act of kindness is important and there are already 3 definite events planned for 2014:

1. There will be another five a side football competition in 2014, open for all age groups and to be held on Saturday 12th June 2014. Details will be shown on Huw's web site well in advance;
2. Huw's Dad Nick and Huw's cousin Michael will be doing a sponsored cycle ride around the 19 football grounds that Huw and Nick went to (often with Carys as well) to see Cardiff City. The sponsored ride will cover more than 1,000 miles in 9 days and people are welcome to join in at any stage – particularly the South Wales and Yorkshire legs. The ride will be between 19<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> July and details will be put on Huw's web site early in the spring.
3. The Huw Thatcher cycle challenge, organised by Upperthong Cricket Club will also take place again in 2014 - it will be on Sunday 27th July 2014 - details to follow on the web site.



## 2013 - THE YEAR OF HUW'S 18<sup>TH</sup> BIRTHDAY

25<sup>th</sup> November 2013 was a sad day; a day thinking about what might have been. There is a [video available at this link](#) for Huw's 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. It has some beautiful pictures of Huw and words about him - set to music.

There were moments of sadness every day in 2013, but also moments of pride and determination. A notable day was when I came across two beautiful photos of Huw that my Mother took which I hadn't previously seen; these appear on front cover and on page 3 of this report. Never again will I grumble about having to stop when a friend of family member wants people to stop for just a moment – to take a photo.

During 2013, Carys and I continued to go to Cardiff City matches (mostly away matches in the north of England). The football gives us a sense of connection with Huw, and is a comforting 'constant' in life, that we know Huw loved and which we shared so much with him. Carys and I loved watching Cardiff City get promoted to the Premier League in 2013, but the most important moment for us in 2013, was watching Cardiff City walk out to play Liverpool at Anfield - which is a venue that was on Huw and my 'bucket list' for 'must do' trips. As we watched the Bluebirds walk out to the music of 'You'll Never Walk Alone', we were dreaming about Huw - like we did at so many games in the promotion winning year.



**Cardiff City walking out at Anfield in December 2013. For all sorts of reasons, Anfield is the most evocative of football grounds.**

Finally, in a year when Huw was missed as much as ever, Carys left school – moving on from Holmfirth High School to sixth form college in Huddersfield. I will always feel connected with Holmfirth High because Huw was thriving there in 2011. Now that his friends and his sister have left, it sometimes feels a bit like he's stuck there on his own. But the sense of carrying Huw with us, as we move on in our lives, is a more optimistic vision, and one which I think many of us can relate to.

Thank you for reading this report and for your ongoing support, and best wishes to everyone for 2014.

**Huw Thatcher: beautiful son and brother. Cousin, grandson, and nephew. New friend. Special friend. Old friend. Best friend.**

