



*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 2016 and 2017



BIRT
Brain Injury
Rehabilitation Trust



The Disabilities Trust

REFLECTIONS ON 2016 and 2017

For various reasons I didn't get round to writing a report in 2016 so here is a joint one for 2016 and 2017.

Both years were eventful: 2016 seeing Huw's 21st birthday, and early in 2017 my Mum (known to Huw and Carys as 'Granny') passed away. Both were sad events but I have accepted Mum passing away. She was 83, had led a very full life and we were lucky to be able to celebrate her life in February 2017 with family and lots of old (and some new) friends. I was very touched to come across her hand-written reflections about Huw and equally to find out she had left a sizeable donation to The Huw Thatcher Trust in memory of a grandson she adored. The feeling was mutual from the beginning of Huw's life through to his teenage years. As a baby Huw spent many happy times with 'Granny' including some weekends on his own with her, and as a teenager he would pick her up and hug her, greeting her as his 'little Granny'.



Here Huw and Carys with 'Granny' on a holiday in Spain. A holiday in which teenager Huw was a delight to be with – funny and 'pushing it' with me and Carys – tolerant and caring with his Granny

It was moving during the period we lost Mum to reflect on the deep sadness she felt at losing Huw, and to reflect on how wrong it was that his life tragically ended before his elders. This was not lost on Mum over the last 6 years of her life, but we're happy that she to live her life independently (stoically) until she became ill at the end of 2016.

While coming to terms with the loss of Mum is a natural process, it isn't possible to 'come to terms' with losing Huw, although it is possible to 'live with it', and it was heartening that The Huw Thatcher Trust continued to be a way for many people to respect Huw, and at least feel they were doing something for him.

Huw's 21st birthday in 2016 should have been in his final year at uni – I feel sure he would now have finished his degree and either be starting out on a career or away doing exciting things like a 'gap year'. We would have been (and are) very proud of our Huw, and we are equally proud of Carys who has completed her 2nd year at uni; this summer will see her graduation and her 21st birthday. We will be as proud as anyone can be of Carys, but equally thinking of Huw and what could have and should have been. He would have been full of pride and admiration for what his 'little' sister has achieved in such difficult circumstances. He will also be proud of his Mum (and maybe even his Dad haha) – 2016 and 2017 have seen success for all 3 of us. I'm sure summer 2018 will be a happy time for us, but we won't forget for a minute.

By the end of 2017 the Huw Thatcher Trust had raised a total of £118,000. We raised £45,000 in 2011, £25,000 in 2012, £21,000 in 2013, £9,000 in 2014, £8,000 in 2015, £4,000 in 2016 and £6,500 in 2017. As I have said before, this is a lovely tribute to Huw and I was surprised and happy that such significant amounts were raised in both 2016 and 2017.

Thank you to everyone who has contributed to The Huw Thatcher Trust over the last couple of years. The continuing tributes and memories of Huw mean a lot. Life will never be the same, and the loss of Huw has implications wider than can be imagined. But remembering him and paying tribute to him is part of making it possible to live with what happened nearly 7 years ago, and to still be able to find plenty of happiness in life – it's too short not to.

Huw's website continues here: www.huwthatchertrust.org and the Trust is on Facebook [at this link](#).

Nick Thatcher, January 2018

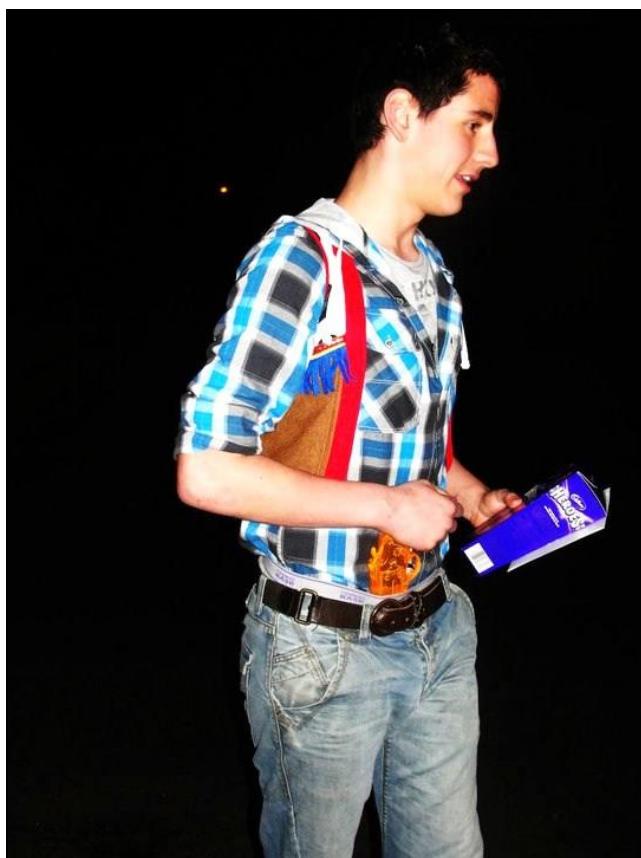
WHAT IS THE HUW THATCHER TRUST?

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.

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 any added 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.

By the end of 2017 the Trust had raised £118,000, and Irene Sobowale, Chief Executive of Disabilities Trust and BIRT said at this time:

"I am delighted that The Huw Thatcher Trust has now raised an amazing £118,000 which includes over £112,000 for BIRT. This is a wonderful achievement, for which we are very grateful and I would like to thank Huw's friends and family for their commitment to supporting BIRT. Huw was clearly a young man who was much loved and we are privileged that his memory lives on at so many of our centres".



Here is Huw in February 2010 at Ella's surprise 15th birthday party. He had recently celebrated his own 15th birthday with the rest of his life ahead of him

HUW THATCHER, BORN 25TH 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 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 was also a keen support of Cardiff City but 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 planned to go to university. Huw was a free spirit with a beautiful smile, who is (and always will be), a sadly missed and much loved son, brother, grandson, cousin, nephew and friend.



15 year old Huw's sense of fun is captured in this photo at school

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Funds were raised from the following events in 2016 and 2017.

2016

- April 2016: the Manchester marathon; Euan Casey - £800
- Summer 2016: cycling challenge; Nick Greenwood - £900
- October 2016: the Manchester half-marathon; Carys Thatcher -£800

2017

- Spring 2017: Holmfirth High School; non uniform day - £500
- April 2017: the Manchester marathon; Will Bowers and September 2017: the Great North Run; Sean Brennan - £900
- June 2017: Coast to Coast in a day; Dave Briggs - £300

There were lots of further donations from family and friends throughout 2015 - many from regular contributors who kindly give donations on 13th March, on Huw's birthday, at Christmas, or at other times – notably my brother Steve, the Travis family, and Sam Briggs' Grandmother. These donations are often followed by an exchange about Huw – something nice and / or amusing about Huw which means a lot to me.

Finally I continue to be very grateful to colleagues at my work place, the Department for Education in Sheffield, who do cake / bake sales most months during the year and every year have 1 or 2 of these in memory of Huw. Also 'The Book People' (who hold sales at work) donate to the Huw Thatcher Trust after each visit. It really means a lot for Huw to be remembered at my work place where obviously I spent so much time.

There were numerous other gestures and awards that were made in Huw's name and these are covered later in this report

Total raised in 2016 and 2017

£10,500

HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2016 AND 2017

Euan Casey: Manchester marathon

It was a great effort from Euan to finish the 26 mile course through the streets of west Manchester in less than 4 hours, especially as the end of his training plan was disrupted by injury. We're very grateful for Euan's support in doing this and all the preparation that was needed, and of course to everyone who generously sponsored him in order to reach a superb total of £800. It takes a lot of support and donations to raise that amount, and a lot of determination to complete a run of 26 miles. Euan was a year below Huw at school and has been an important part of Carys's life for the last 4 or 5 years. Thank you Euan, and well done. .



Euan on his way to completing the Manchester marathon – in a shirt with Huw's logo and name.

Nick Greenwood: where's the bear cycle challenge

Nick Greenwood knew Huw well from junior football days at Hepworth and remembers playing against him in Wednesday evening five a side games too. Nick's employers run a challenge every year for nominated charities and the challenge this year involved transporting a bear over 1000 miles under human effort. Nick's part in this was a cycling challenge with his work colleagues from Kier Group and Nick kindly nominated The Huw Thatcher Trust as the charity for this. This event was a great bonus in 2016 and these times when people contact me with a surprise event or contribution in Huw's memories mean a lot – and again provided an opportunity to reflect on happy times in the past with Huw and his friends. Thanks a lot Nick – a great effort to raise £900 and even better that you thought of Huw.



Nick Greenwood and his colleagues ready to set off from Leeds to Manchester – with the bear (although it looks more like a panda to me!)

Carys Thatcher: Manchester half-marathon

This was the highlight of 2016 for me. Other people have run further and longer, and taken on even harder physical challenges, but none can have been done with any more love and determination than this run by Carys. 2016 had been a challenging year for Carys and despite a nasty injury 2½ weeks before the event, she completed it in fine style in a time of under 2½ hours and with a sprint finish! Carys has done many events in memory of her brother but this was the first that she had decided on completely herself, and completed on her own. Of course we think of Huw every day, and he affects our lives every day, but this public and physical commitment meant a lot to Carys and her family. As a bonus she raised £800; well done Carys, it was a pleasure watching you that day in Manchester – a day I will never forget and another day that made me very proud of you and Huw.



Carys with a very proud Dad just after finishing the Manchester half marathon –in the same ‘Huw’ shirt that Euan wore for the marathon earlier in the year

Holmfirth High School: non-uniform day

Back in 2011 Huw's friends were in year 10 at school; they decided to do so many lovely things in Huw's name. It was lovely to hear 6 years later, that the school had itself decided to nominate the Huw Thatcher Trust for £500 of proceeds from its non-uniform day in spring 2017. I am very grateful to the school for doing this and for all the young people who brought their £1 to school that day for their dress-down day and to donate to the Huw Thatcher Trust. Holmfirth High School was perfect for Huw with some great achievements, and most of all where he met some wonderful friends. It remains a place with special memories.

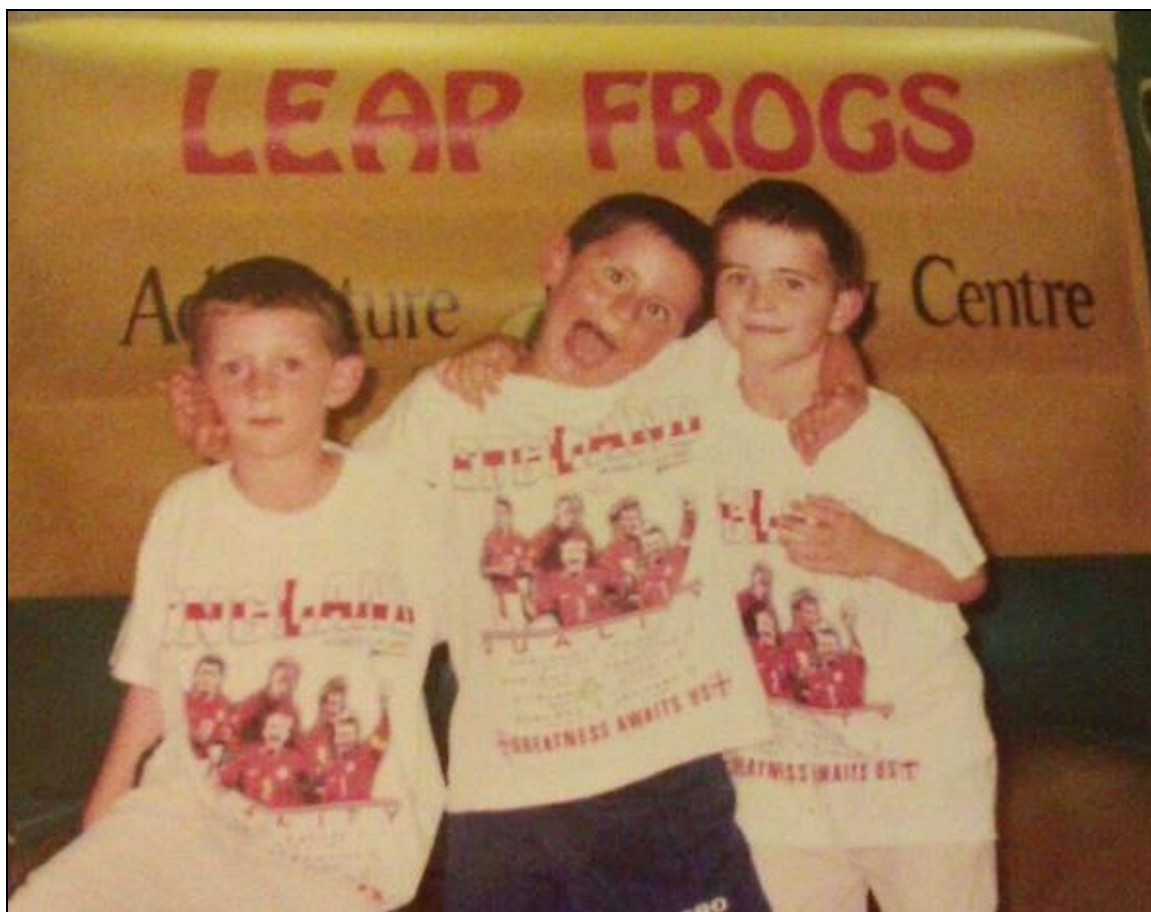


15-year old Huw with a typical cheeky smile at school - where he felt very much at home

Sean Brennan and Will Bowers: Great North Run and Manchester marathon

Will Bowers took part in the Manchester marathon in April 2017, and Sean Brennan completed the Great North Run later that year.

Will was friendly with Huw since the age of 5 and I remember so many times of Huw basically making William laugh. Will liked having the reassuring figure of Huw playing alongside him in defence for Hepworth United and they remained good friends. Huw would be proud of what one of his oldest friends has achieved at uni and so on and would be equally proud that Will ran for him last year and helped raise £900 with Sean.



Huw making Will and Sam Briggs laugh like usual – at a party when they were much younger

Another old friend Sean Brennan completed the Great North Run in a Cardiff City shirt - one of a set of shirts he and the rest of the team wore for the remainder of the 2011 season while playing for Hepworth - in memory of Huw. Sean was one half of a superb partnership in central defence with Huw and they loved playing together – often helping each other out and backing each other up.

Huw can't line up in defence with Sean and Will anymore but they still back up their old friend who they spent so much time with at home, at school, out and about and on the football pitch. It meant a lot that these two put in a great effort with the running for Huw and raising so much in his memory.



Two great pictures of Sean – before and after the Great North Run and in the Cardiff City shirt

David Briggs: Coast to Coast in a day

Dave Briggs completed this classic English route not in 2 or 3 days like normal people, but all of it in one day! Dave completed the 150 miles, which included over 11,000 feet of climbing (which for those not in the know is a heck of a lot) in less than 11 hours. By anybody's standards that's a great achievement. The whole Briggs family have been good friends to our family over the last 16 years including being very supportive in memory of Huw. Thank you to everyone who sponsored Dave for his mighty ride and in helping him raise £300 for the Trust.

AWARDS AND MEMORIES

The North Devon Half Marathon: June 2017

I loved running 3 half-marathons for Huw in 2013 but on doctor's orders (due to a previous knee injury) I don't do running now. But last summer I ignored the doctor and ran the North Devon Half Marathon with Huw's cousin Michael! The location in Woolacombe is a beautiful place with amazing memories for our family – Jenny, Huw, Carys and I had a number of great holidays there and I was there with my family many times as a child. Mikey completed the half marathon in a little over 1½ hours – I was nearly an hour behind but was pleased to complete the event which was incredibly hilly. It was worth every step of the way for the views, and was worth much more than that to be able to run for Huw. Michael has done a number of events in memory of Huw, and other family members would have done this event if it weren't for injury. What was nice was that it felt like it was all for Huw; we didn't get sponsorship because I feel we've asked people enough already to sponsor us.



Celebrating and then reflecting with Mikey. That was the mood – feeling elated with the achievement, but at the same time still missing the most beautiful boy in the world

The Spirit of Huw Thatcher Award

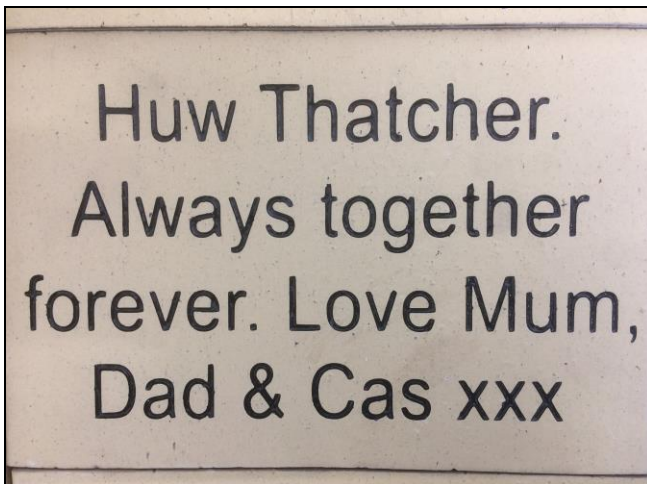
This award was introduced by Hepworth Juniors in memory of Huw. The most striking thing about how Huw played football was he did it with a big smile on his face. He was a more-than decent player but always looked out for his team mates and most important to him, was having fun with his pals. This award is presented each year to a player selected from that year's 15-year olds' group, showing similar spirit to Huw during the season. Recipients to date are:

- 2011 – George Richardson
- 2012 – Nelson Nunez
- 2013 – Ben Earnshaw
- 2014 – William Oakley
- 2015 – Stan Wilson-Hughes
- 2016 – Zak Sleney
- 2017 – Alex Morton

Our connection with Hepworth United continues, as in November 2017 I was honoured to be asked to cut the ribbon at the opening of the new Hepworth United Clubhouse. Congratulations to the club on this achievement led by David Brennan with huge contributions from Rob Wilks, Hannah Ainley, Ken Mettrick and Mick Walker. This is a fantastic community facility for a fantastic community club that means a lot to me - especially John Field and Dave Brennan who have been so supportive to me and our family since 2011. Huw was well known to both these guys and he thought a lot of them – the feeling was mutual. A memory brick for Huw will be incorporated into the building along with others who have bought a brick in the near future.



Here are: the first recipient of the award (Huw's friend George Richardson) at a moving presentation in 2011; and the most recent (Alex Morton) in 2017



And here is Huw's memory brick to appear in the wall of the new club house and me cutting the ribbon at the opening in 2017 – a day to celebrate but also a day of some sadness and reflection.

The Huw Thatcher Pride and Passion Shield

And this is an award given by Upperthong Cricket Club to the player from the 15 year olds' group, showing particular pride and passion in the way they played cricket; just like Huw did. Recipients to date are:

- 2011 – Sam Briggs
- 2012 – George Oakley
- 2013 – Ben Earnshaw
- 2014 – Max Harris
- 2015 – Ben Barmforth
- 2016 – Dan Parr
- 2017 – Ella Harris

Huw had many happy times at the cricket club – as a little boy at the gala and as he was older playing cricket. Like the football, the best thing for him was having fun with his friends, but he developed into a fine attacking batsman for the under 15 and under 17 teams. A bit like Hepworth Football Club, there will be a new clubhouse at the cricket club and we'll buy one of the memory bricks for Huw – kindly funded by his uncles and aunts. We are grateful to the coaches at Upperthong Cricket Club for introducing this award and for all the time they put in to help Huw enjoy his times so much at cricket.



The first recipient of the pride and passion shield in 2011 was Huw's friend Sam Briggs. The most recent was Ella Harris in 2017 and it has meant a lot to present the award to Sam, Ella and the other 5 recipients over the years.

Huw's bench at Sands

Huw's bench at Sands is a lovely place to go, and reflect on the times Huw spent outside as a young lad and as a teenager at Sands. His bench is heavily used and the ground had worn away due to the footfall. Thanks to Chris Churm who works for Marshalls (construction), we now have a paved area in front of Huw's bench, all courtesy of Chris and his employer. I'm really grateful for this and for Chris's friendship and support over the years.



Huw's bench before the paving – and then after with Churmie. I understand Chris did a great job of labouring on the day for the real expert from Marshalls! Many thanks to Chris and his colleagues.

HOW THE FUNDS ARE BEING USED

Income 2011-2017

£118,000

Expenditure

Richard Ford Trust	-	£3,000
Skate for Isaac	-	£200
Maintenance of Huw's benches and tubs in Holmfirth and Digley	-	£200
Payment in kind to BIRT (garden materials)	-	£2,000
Laura Cane Cancer Trust	-	£50
Purchase of memory brick at Upperthong Cricket Club	-	£200
BIRT cash expenditure	-	£112,350
Total	-	£118,000

The money raised is being spent wisely and the detail of the BIRT expenditure of £112,350 is shown below and overleaf.

BIRT cash expenditure

Item	Cost (£)
Eyes Alight Appeal	£10,000
Daniel Yorath House – Leeds	
Internet cafe and equipment	£7,000
Bikes etc	£1,000
Osman House – Leeds	
Garden work in 2012	£4382
Heathermount - Berkshire	
Musical equipment for young people	£400

Item	Cost (£)
Chalkdown House - Swindon	
OT Kitchen	£1,580
Garden	£3,088
IT suite	£12,341
Physiotherapy equipment	£8,661
Tŷ Aberdafen - Llanelli	
Garden	£3,438
OT Kitchen	£1,581
Physiotherapy equipment	£8,661
Bicycles and equipment	£1000
Cardio-wall equipment	£7061
Goole neuro rehabilitation centre	
2 Laptops	£1,000
Physiotherapy equipment	£5,000
Daniel Yorath House – Leeds	
Physiotherapy equipment	£13,440
Thomas Edward Mitton House – Milton Keynes	
Redecoration and signage project	£6,550
Osman House – Leeds	
Garden work in 2017/18	£9978
York House – York	
Music Therapy	£2000
Redford Court - Liverpool	
Sensory room	£4189
Total BIRT cash	£112,350

FINAL COMMENTS

Things have been quieter for the Huw Thatcher Trust for the last couple of years, but not as quiet as I thought they might have been, and it has been lovely to talk to people over the last two years about things they have wanted to do in memory of Huw. Goodness knows what 2018 and 2019 will bring – it could be quiet but no doubt there will be things that people decide to do that I don't yet know about.

A reluctance to ask generous people for sponsorship too often, means that I won't be doing a major event in the short term. I will however do a major challenge one year soon. Huw will always be a priority in my life and I can't think of a better thing to do than to commit to a major event - when I've worked out and planned what it'll be!

Meanwhile, life goes on without Huw. It will soon be 7 years since we saw his smile, heard his voice, and saw him move. 7 years since he made us laugh, since he entertained, performed on the sports pitch, and since he thought about his future. It will always seem like 'yesterday' to me and has changed our lives forever. Despite that it is possible to lead a happy and full life and our family is evidence of that. Carys is such a source of happiness and I love it that she reminds me so much of Huw - the way she talks and moves often 'catches' me - those are special moments.

Thank you for taking the trouble to read this report; and reports for the previous 5 years are [available here](#). Belated New Year wishes for 2018 and much love to all Huw's family and friends.



Huw in August 2010 in the Lake District as a 14-year old – he was starting to think about his ambitions and the future.