



*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 2015



BIRT
Brain Injury
Rehabilitation Trust



The Disabilities Trust

REFLECTIONS ON 2015

By the end of 2015 the Huw Thatcher Trust had raised a total of £107,000. We raised £45,000 in 2011, £25,000 in 2012, £21,000 in 2013, £9,000 in 2014, and £7,000 in 2015. Annual reports for each of the five years are available [here](#).

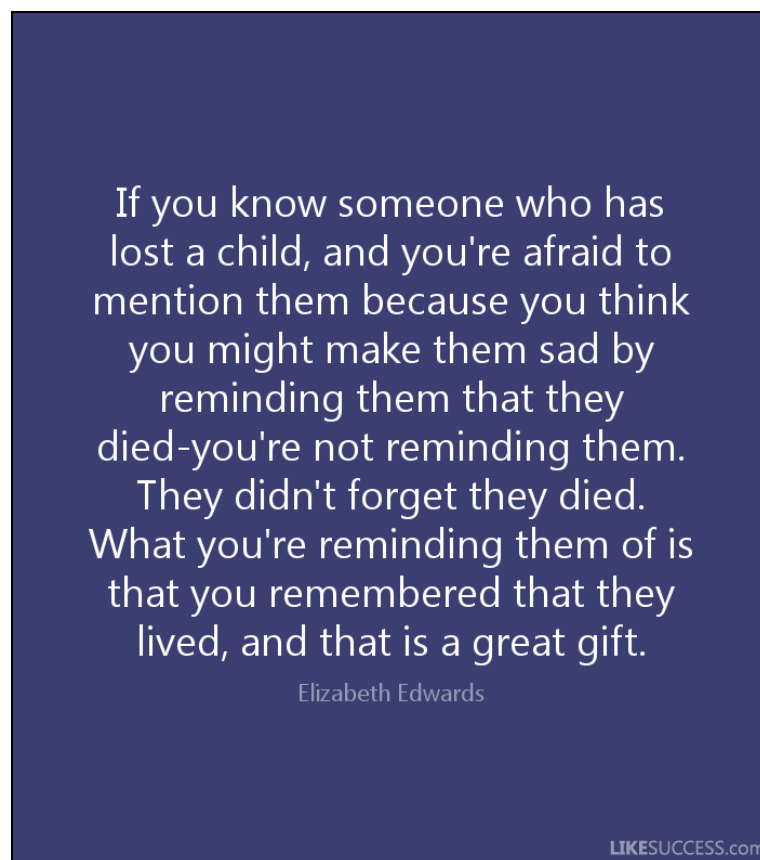
If at the beginning of 2015 I was asked how much we would raise that year, I would have said around £5,000. So I'm delighted and moved that we exceeded that. The funds and what can be done with them are crucial, but the fact that lots of people have been inspired to do something in Huw's name means so much. It's not just what people have been inspired to do, but also the generous sponsorship and donations – particularly over the last few months at the time of Huw's birthday and Christmas when I received a great many kind donations from such a wide range of people. Many thanks to everyone who took part in an event, sponsored us, or made a donation in 2015.

The fact that we raised so much in 2015 was all the more satisfying when you consider that a knee injury prevented me from doing what I wanted to during the year. I had planned to run 15 half-marathons in different parts of the country where we had visited or done things with Huw – and others would have joined me at certain events. This wasn't possible and my sporting involvement in the Trust in future will have to be more based around cycling, swimming or climbing and I intend to do much more of both of those over the years. During 2015 however, instead of the half marathons a key event during the year was the UK 24 hour National 3 Peaks Challenge which is covered more below and raised well over £2,000 on its own.

The continued efforts of the Trust were recognised by the Brain Injury Rehabilitation Trust (BIRT) who we support when I was presented with a certificate recognising me as an Ambassador for BIRT. It was nice to see friends at BIRT on Huw's 20th birthday in November to receive the certificate.



It seemed appropriate to see everyone at BIRT on Huw's birthday and to see some of the physio equipment we have funded in action. It also reminded me, that we have now remembered 5 birthdays without Huw. He didn't even see his own 16th birthday and has also missed his 17th, 18th, 19th and 20th. It still seems as if I was talking to Huw the other day; teasing him, hearing about what he has been doing, watching him grow up and develop, hearing the lovely way he spoke (his deep voice and local accent), looking at the way he moved so naturally on the sports field, watching him with his friends, noticing when he checked out a girl (and laughing with him about it), seeing him with his cousins, noticing how much he protected and adored his Mum and sister, seeing first-hand what a compassionate young guy he was, watching him at ease with older people and young children alike. These memories are so precious and it has been comforting to hear people talking about Huw during 2015, like it will be every year. This quote from Elizabeth Edwards explains how important it is to hear people talking about Huw:



But even this quote isn't quite right. Huw wasn't a child – but neither had he been lucky enough to experience very much of what we experience as adults. He was a young guy, developing into a young man with his life ahead of him.

It meant so much that the Huw Thatcher Trust continued so actively as a tribute to Huw in 2015. I can't predict what direction the Huw Thatcher Trust will take in 2016, but Huw's website will continue to show what we are doing through the year: www.huwthatchertrust.org. There's also a Facebook group [at this link](#). I hope you find the rest of this report interesting and inspiring.

Nick Thatcher, January 2016

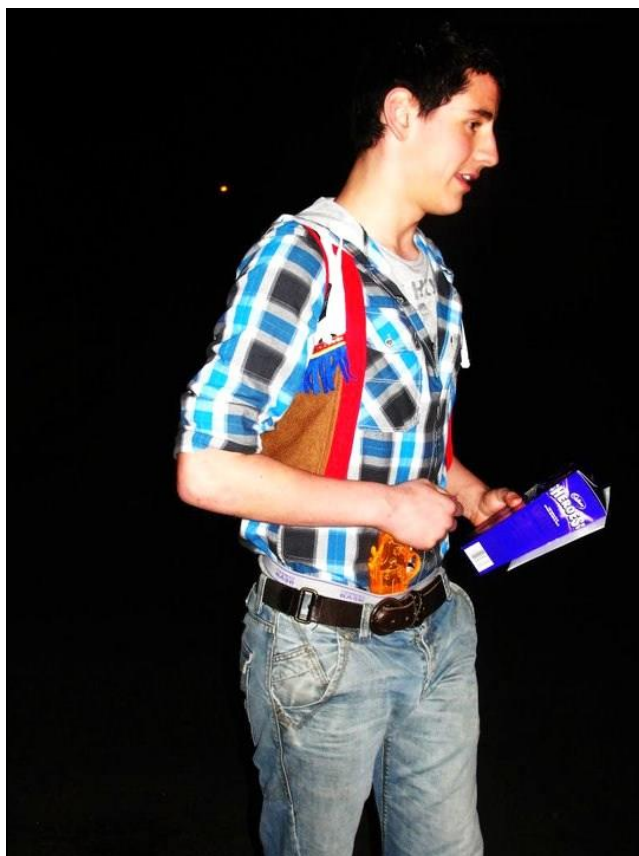
WHAT IS THE HUW THATCHER TRUST?

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 2015 the Trust had raised over £107,000, and Irene said at this time:

"I am delighted that The Huw Thatcher Trust has now raised an amazing £107,000 which includes over £102,000 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 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 perfectly in this photo at school

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Funds were raised from the following key events in 2015.

- June & December: Upperthong Summer Gala & Christmas Carol Concert - £300
- 18th and 19th July: UK National 3 Peaks 24 hour challenge; Huw's and Nick's friends - £2,700
- September and other occasions: cake and book sales at Nick's work - £500
- October – dress down day collection; Motonovo Finance Cardiff office - £1,000
- 7th November – Men's Health Survival of the Fittest Challenge; Ryan Blezzard - £1,200
- December – Climbing Mount Kilimanjaro; Josh Hoyle - £400

On top of this, Heather Macmillan completed a mammoth 55 mile walk in March, Abby Sanderson completed the Yorkshire Marathon in October, and a friend of Jason Brook held a raffle and kept collecting tins at his road-side food stall near Northampton. These fantastic contributions came from really tough events and generous donations – and raised over £400 between them. There were numerous other donations from family and friends throughout 2015 too - many from regular contributors who kindly give donations on 13th March, on Huw's birthday, at Christmas, or at other times – kind people remembering Huw at important times.

Total raised in 2015

£7,000

THE MAIN EVENTS FROM 2015

The Upperthong Summer Gala & Christmas Carol Concert

Upperthong Village Hall is a great local amenity and the Village Hall Committee organise various events during the year for local people and to raise funds for maintenance of the Hall and for chosen charities. Along with New Mill, Upperthong was home to Huw - having gone through Infant and Junior School in Upperthong as well as playing for the village cricket club. He also had one of his birthday parties in the Village Hall and enjoyed the annual village Gala for many years. We have so many happy memories of Huw as young boy in Upperthong so it meant a lot that Steve Taylor and the Committee decided to remember Huw and raise money for the Huw Thatcher Trust at the Summer Gala and Christmas Carol Concert. Thank you to everyone involved.



The winner of the Wellie Wanging competition receiving his award!

18th and 19th July: UK National 3 Peaks 24 hour challenge; Huw's and Nick's friends

This was a highlight of the year. We've done some tough things for the Trust over the years – long distance running, endurance cycling, 24 hours of football, and so on – but this event seemed as difficult as any of the others!

Josh Hoyle (long-time opponent of Huw's while playing for neighbouring Honley Football Club) and I sat down and started thinking about the event in April. 3 months later 21 of us were at the bottom of Sca Fell Pike having been away from Holmfirth for 24 hours with no proper sleep, having already climbed Ben Nevis, and freezing cold in heavy rain and literally icy conditions – oh and with very limited visibility into the bargain. It doesn't sound a very appealing prospect and to be honest it wasn't.

Hampered by injury I was only able to do Ben Nevis but the rest of the group set out on peak 2 at 4.00am in the morning to climb Sca Fell pike in atrocious conditions.

2 drivers drove 1000 miles in 38 hours, 4 climbers did all 3 peaks in 24 hours, 14 climbers did 2 peaks and would have done all 3 if it weren't for getting lost $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way up one of them (in what can only be described as atrocious conditions), and 1 climber did 1 peak, and would have done all 3 if it weren't for injury. Some put in amazing times on individual peaks, and one did Snowdon in under 2 hours. All were hurting and 2 carrying injuries. There were young and not so young, males, females, parents, sons, daughters. One was still recovering from serious illness and others did things they never thought they would achieve. Some knew Huw as best mates, others new him as friends of their 'children', and others knew of him through family or friends. All 21 had a sense of adventure, were prepared to take risks and push themselves close to the limit. Some did it because Huw was in their hearts, others did it because they knew about Huw and had a sense of spirit and adventure. Some were delighted with their achievements, and I know some had a sense of disappointment about getting within touching distance of all 3 peaks in 24 hours. But none should have been disappointed and full respect to everyone involved including the drivers Dave Brennan and Jeremy Hoyle who showed great resilience and on whom we all relied, not least for our safety.

The climbers were: Will Clowes, Sam Bellas, Will Bowers, Callum McCloughlin, Matthew Woolhouse, Josh Hoyle, Richard Wheeler, Kevin Firth, Tom Birkhead, Curtis Firth, Fleur Meecham, Jonny Loy, Amber Sinclair, Lisa Parry, John Field, Steve Harris, Russ Briggs, Michelle Briggs, and Nick Thatcher.



3 of Huw's friends near the top of Snowdon – taking Huw with them

It meant a lot to be involved with this group doing the 3 peaks with this group – 5 of whom were close friends of Huw. We raised more money than I thought we would, and it was a chance to spend time with old friends and make some new ones. The 3 peaks very much reflected Huw – he always liked meeting new people and always sought to widen his circle of friends – he was always adventurous and happy to take a risk. We thought of Huw a lot on the trip and he would have been proud of all of us.

September and other occasions: cake and book sales at Nick's work - £500

Over the last few years colleagues at my work in Sheffield have consistently supported the Huw Thatcher Trust. The Trust has been nominated as the charity to receive funds from regular book sales, and a cake sale in the autumn raised more than any equivalent event had raised at my workplace before. Everyone enjoyed the day and thank you to everyone who provided fab cakes or who purchased anything on the day.



My work colleagues at Sheffield and some of the fantastic cakes they provided

October – dress down day collection; Motonovo Finance Cardiff office - £1,000

With many thanks to Alex Layton and everyone at Motonovo in Cardiff for thinking of Huw when deciding how to allocate £1,000 they raised in the autumn. Another event during in 2015 that had great meaning: a lovely young woman from a fantastic family, who never met Huw but saw the hurt and love of Huw's extended family.....who cared about a beautiful boy who lived 200 miles away who was a big Cardiff City fan..... and suggested that one of the nominated charities from her work was the Huw Thatcher Trust. Huw and who he was continues to inspire touching and generous acts that show the best in people.....far and wide.



Here's Alex pictured with Huw's uncle (Steve) and cousin (David) in Cardiff.

7th November – Men's Health Survival of the Fittest Challenge; Ryan Blezzard - £1,200

The best way to describe this is to show the words that Ryan put on his Just Giving page about this event.

'Having always been interested in fitness and training with my job being a PE teacher I thought it about time to set myself a goal of completing something that is going to push me on all fronts in terms of physicality and mentally and this seemed the perfect one for that! More so, I wanted to take the opportunity to continue to raise the profile and raise some funds of an amazing charity in the Huw Thatcher Trust. I had the pleasure of teaching Huw in my early days at Holmfirth High he was one of the most kind hearted and talented students who was the captain of the first ever school side I coached. His legacy and memory is now firmly embedded into the school community and none more so than in the PE department where our students walk past his signed shirt hanging with pride on the PE corridor on a daily basis, inspiring the youngsters of the future'.

Blez later said:

'Huw was the captain of the first school side I ever managed in my role as PE teacher at Holmfirth High and was everything you want in a footballer and a leader'.

Huw and me were both very proud that Huw captained a strong and successful school team – he loved his PE with Blez and the rest of the PE teachers. School PE and football were among Huw's happiest times and it's fitting that Blez raised £1,200 for the Trust doing this event, and particularly to see it meant so much to him. Thank you to Ryan Blezzard and all his family and friends who generously sponsored him and [here's an article from the Huddersfield Examiner](#) about Ryan's achievement.



Here's Huw's replica Hepworth United shirt that Blez refers to; the signed shirt Huw was so proud of.

And below is Blez at the event – he even bought special kit for it with Huw's picture. It was perfect to see Blez throw everything into it for Huw.



December – Climbing Mount Kilimanjaro; Josh Hoyle - £400

Not content with completing the UK 3 Peaks for the Trust, Josh Hoyle spread his wings to another continent to climb Mount Kilimanjaro in December - the highest freestanding mountain in the world and the highest mountain on the African continent. Josh successfully made the 19,341 foot climb with his Huw band on his wrist and raised a superb £400 in the process. Having got sponsorship for the 3 Peaks earlier in the year, and his family having been so supportive of the Huw Thatcher Trust in the past, this was a fantastic effort and I would like to say a big thank you to all his family and friends for their generous sponsorship of Josh for this event. By no means everyone who attempts this climb succeeds in making it, so massive congratulations to Josh.

Here is Josh at the highest point in Africa!



HOW THE FUNDS ARE BEING USED

Income 2011-2015

£107,000

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
BIRT cash expenditure	-	£101,600
Total	-	£107,000

The money raised is being spent wisely and the detail of the BIRT expenditure of £101,600 is shown 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	£5000
Heathermount - Berkshire	
Musical equipment for young people	£400
Chalkdown House - Swindon	
OT Kitchen	£1,580
Garden	£3,088
IT suite	£15,551
Physiotherapy equipment	£8,661
New residential rehabilitation service at Llanelli	
IT facilities	£15,550
Garden	£3,088
OT Kitchen	£1,581
Physiotherapy equipment	£8,661
Bicycles and equipment	£1000
Goole neuro rehabilitation centre	
2 Laptops	£1,000
Physiotherapy equipment	£5,000
Daniel Yorath House – Leeds	
Physiotherapy equipment	£13,440
Total BIRT cash	£101,600

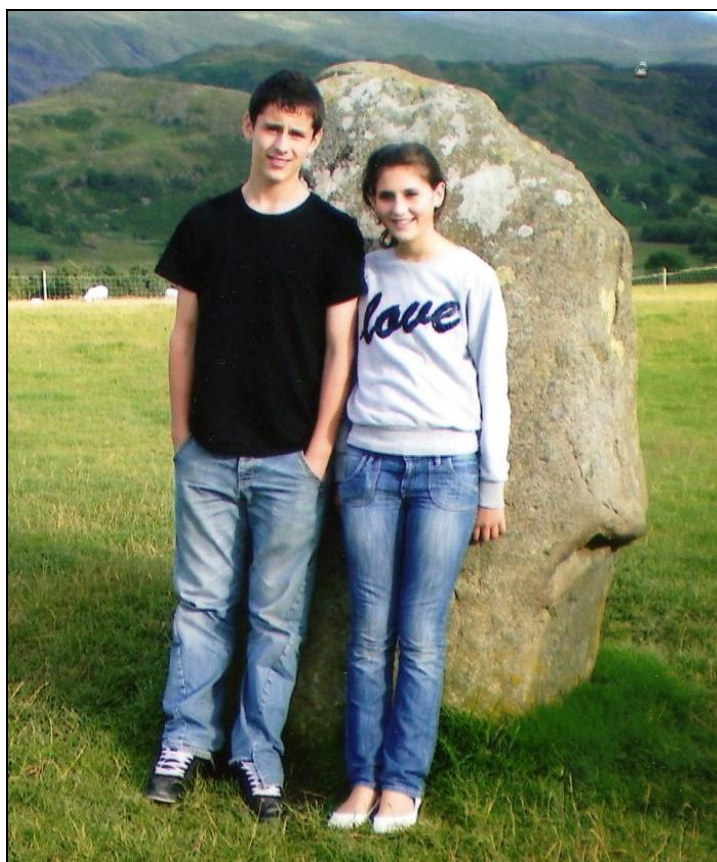
FINAL COMMENTS

Things will be much quieter for the Huw Thatcher Trust in 2016. I have taken part in endurance events every year and I have ideas about future challenges but I haven't been confident enough about my knee injury to plan anything for 2016. But it has improved a lot recently and I'll announce my next big challenge (for 2017) in due course. Meanwhile I reflect on how much we've all done already to remember and respect Huw and I'll treat whatever happens in 2016 regarding the Trust as a bonus.

My final reflections on 2015 are that it has been a year of great change. Carys and I moved out of the house where Huw spent so many happy years. We may have only moved 2 miles away but it feels like something much more significant – no longer being in a home where we can picture Huw chilling out with us to watch a movie, getting stuck in with the cooking in the kitchen, or getting ready for a weekend football match.

This along with Carys starting at Uni in Manchester meant it was a year of changes and a year of trying to embrace what the year was going to bring. Huw would be so proud of his younger sister and also proud of the rest of his family, his friends, and everyone who has been involved in the Huw Thatcher Trust.

Thank you for reading this report and for your ongoing support, and best wishes to everyone for the rest of 2016.



Huw and Carys together in 2010 when Huw was 14 and Carys was 13; she celebrated her 18th birthday in 2015.