

# BECAUSE OF YOU

## WHAT'S INSIDE?



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AMBASSADOR -  
ALFIE WATTS**

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SUPPORT**



**WINSTON'S  
WISH *www***

Giving hope to grieving children

**AUTUMN 2024**

# IT'S BECAUSE OF YOU

**I would like to start by expressing my thanks to each and every one of you.**

**Without your kindness, contributions and efforts, none of what we achieve as a charity would be possible, and the children, young people and their families who turn to us for help when they need it most would continue to struggle. Thank you.**

We are a charity committed to ensuring that no child or young person should face grief alone. It is a cause close to my heart, my own dad died when I was 12 and my sister was 10. This was 1978, he was 39 years old, and his death was shocking and unexpected. I often wonder what my life would have been like, or what sort of person I would have become, if I had been able to turn to Winston's Wish, which of course did not exist back then. It is impossible to know, but I certainly want to do my bit to ensure that other children receive the help they need that was not available to me.

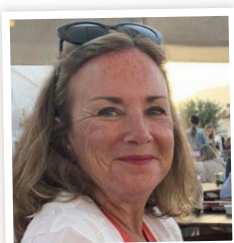
Reflecting back on the year, Winston's Wish has reached and impacted the lives of 82,079 bereaved children and young people, more than ever before! We did this by extending the hours of our live chat, email and helpline services from 8am to 8pm, Monday to Friday, so that children and young people have more opportunity to reach out directly to our bereavement support workers. We introduced and recruited volunteers

to support and enhance these services and we made it possible for young people aged 13 or over to take control of their own grief support journey and refer themselves to our services.

 **We reached and impacted the lives of**  
**82,079**  
**bereaved children and young people.**

However, as a sector we still miss too many children and young people, those who either aren't aware of the support available or who are unable to access our services, and our future work will focus on how we can reach more children, more effectively. We need to meet children and young people "where they are", and we are exploring how best to do this.

**We hope that you will continue to support us on our journey to build a society where no child or young people grieves alone.**



**LIZ GRATTON**

**Chair of Trustees,  
Winston's Wish**

# YOUR SUPPORT

**HAS HELPED US BE THERE FOR MORE BEREAVED CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE THAN EVER BEFORE!**

**36,723** bereaved children and young people reached through training delivered in schools, businesses, organisations and community groups across the UK (up 21%).

 Our bereavement content reached **5,042,178** digital users.


**11,424** signed our petition to government to officially record data on the number of bereaved children in the UK.

**76** active Youth Ambassadors shared and used their lived experience of bereavement to advocate for better support for grieving children and young people.


 **£2,528,445** of income generated, 90% of which was generously donated by supporters through donations and legacies.

**YOU MADE THIS POSSIBLE! THANK YOU.**

**45,356** children and young people reached through our digital bereavement services (up 51%)

**18,734** supported through our helpline 

 **18,287** supported by email

**7,170** supported by live chat 

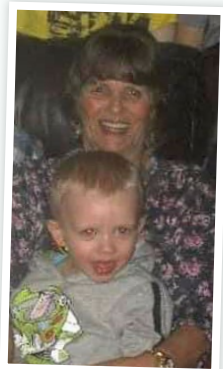
 **663** supported via groups

**502** supported with one-to-one sessions

We delivered **46 sessions** of our newly launched Rapid Response training, supporting schools in the immediate days and weeks following a death in the community.

# HAYDEN'S STORY

On the 22nd November 2022, I lost my Nan. Her passing was really unexpected. My nan got ill quite often, however this time it was different. The pain I felt the day she passed, when I heard, is a pain I've never felt since. My nan was the first person I had lost close to me, but not only was she my nan, she was also one of my biggest supporters and friends.



It took me ages to finally accept that I wasn't okay, and it wasn't until March 2024 that I finally started talking about my nan's passing. One of the first things that Winston's Wish recommended to me was making a memory jar. In this memory jar I now have 5 key memories of my nan, and it's one of my

favourite things. It helps me remember such things as her at Christmas, and her funny jokes.

**I received 8 weeks of counselling, and it was honestly one of the best things I had agreed to.**

The counselling sessions really helped me realise that the way I was feeling was okay to feel. And that grieving a loss was not as straightforward as I believed it would be.

It really helped me open up and talk about things that I had not yet spoken about like the secondary losses. When my nan passed, she had just moved into her own bungalow and had all these plans and things she wanted to do with us grandchildren, but got poorly so quickly that she did not get to do them. I realised that the thought of that was also something that I had really been struggling with too and then speaking about them really made it easier for me to come to terms with them too.

**Overall, without the counselling sessions I really do not think that I'd be as comfortable as I am now talking about my nan's death.**

Hayden

# HEAR FROM THOSE YOU'VE HELPED TO SUPPORT

**"When I was a child, Winston's Wish made my life a little more bearable and I'm extremely grateful for them."**

Service user

**"You have honestly made such a difference to my day, I feel more positive and I cannot thank you enough. I feel so lucky that you guys exist." 😊**

Bereaved young person



**"Thank you so much for helping me today and keep doing what you are doing because everyone at Winston's Wish is amazing you are helping so many young people like me, thank you Winston's Wish"**

Bereaved young person

**"It's good to be somewhere people understand the situation."**

Under 7s online group attendee

"I've had to contact so many organisations over the years about so many different issues. Often, they end up not being able to deliver and there are always such strict criteria. They are also often difficult to get hold of. This was such fast, caring and helpful support."



Professional using live chat



**"I talk here and it helps me; you are very nice to help."**

10 year old live chat user



**Thank you for giving me the opportunity to further a cause that I care about and feel that I can contribute to. Fairly early on after my mum's accident, I told myself that I'd generate some good that wouldn't have occurred otherwise; it's a tragedy that my mum's no longer here, but if no good was generated as a result, then that would be even worse".**



Angus, Youth Advisor

**"Your website and resources have been an absolute inspiration for help and guidance!"**

Ask email service user



**"I really have Winston's Wish to thank for the act of writing about grief. I think if I hadn't had started writing articles about grief for the charity then I wouldn't have been able to write my own play about it."**



Teigan, Winston's Wish Youth Ambassador



# MEET OUR NEW AMBASSADOR, ALFIE



You may recognise the newest addition to the Winston's Wish Ambassador team – meet Alfie Watts. Earlier this year 21-year-old Alfie, alongside best friend Owen, gained fame as they raced across countries and tested their travel skills and team work to be crowned the youngest winners of BBC's "Race Across the World".

But it wasn't just Alfie's camaraderie and competitive spirit that captured the hearts of a nation.

Opening up about his own personal story of loss, 5.8 million viewers watched in awe as Alfie took a moment while in the Vietnamese city of Hoi to light a lantern in memory of his mother Karen who died from breast cancer when Alfie was just five years old. He talked openly about how his life had been affected by his mum's death and how much he missed her, touching hearts and making it the fourth most-watched programme on British television that week.

Now, Alfie is set to take one of his most impactful adventures yet – helping other bereaved children and young people.



Image credit: Studio Lambert

"My Mum's number one aim was to see me in school!" recalls Alfie. "She said, that 'If I'm going to die, then at least, I'm going to die whilst he's in school.' And she did, she died when I was five.



"Over time she created a memory box with messages and photos and all kinds of things. She took me to my first day of school and I think it was a proud moment for her when she took me, but it was a deterioration from there, she'd pushed as far as she could and by Christmas of 2008, it was just a bridge too far."

Reflecting on his time on the show and the touching moment in Hoi city, Alfie shares; "I always knew that that moment would come up when it would be appropriate to remember my mum during the show. Part of me always knew that there would be a right moment to open up about it; it felt necessary."

“

Seeing all the lanterns in Hoi was a beautiful yet bizarre experience. It was triggering because it took me right back to when I was younger; each year, we had a tradition in my family that we would light a lantern to remember my Mum, and we'd write a little message. Reigniting that moment was as special as it was poignant.

”

Now with a hit television series under his belt, **Alfie is keen to be a voice for bereaved young people and champion grief advocacy.** Alfie explains: "For me, growing up without my Mum was my normal. It wasn't a nice normal, but it was my normal, I simply didn't know anything else. It's hard for other people who haven't been bereaved to empathise with.

"I was aware of charities like Winston's Wish when I was younger, and I'm delighted to now be an Ambassador for such an important charity that is reaching the thousands of young people across the UK who are in a similar situation to me."

# FUNDRAISING HEROES

Thank you to all our incredible supporters. From those who collect their change to donate or take on challenges in memory of loved ones, to those who support with a regular donation or get their schools or workplace involved – you are all amazing.

## JOE, SAM, JONNY AND TOM TOOK ON A 100KM CHALLENGE RAISING £5,906!



Joe first reached out to Winston's Wish in search of support for his daughter following the death of her mother, Sophie. "I knew I had to do something to give back to this amazing charity so I enlisted my brother and two of our best mates to take on the 100km South Coast Ultra. I couldn't have gotten through the race without the support of those lads but also know that there are plenty of people who can't get through their own challenges without the support of Winston's Wish so what we did was a small feat compared to what so many families are facing everyday. I am just proud to have been able to support a charity that supported my family when we most needed them."

## INCREDIBLE MONTHLY SUPPORTERS

Nick was just 19 years old when his parents died in a car crash. The donation that Nick gives monthly means we can continue to be there for children and young people who have been bereaved. Unfortunately, those services were limited when Nick's parents died, which is why he continues to give.



"I support Winston's Wish with a monthly donation so that no child or young person in that situation has to face their grief alone and 'just get on with life.'"

## WEAR WELLIES

Eleven schools in the Gosforth Schools Trust participated in wearing wellies, crocs or different shoes to school. They used this opportunity to show bereaved children at each of the schools that they weren't alone. They encouraged everyone to get outside to play with their wellies and provided space for bereaved children to paint plant pots and plant forget-me-not seeds in memory of their important person.

Find out more and create your own wear wellies day - [winstonswish.org/wear-wellies-day](http://winstonswish.org/wear-wellies-day)



## WALKING FOR WINSTON'S WISH

Following the tragic loss of a colleague at Police Scotland Ayrshire Division, leaving behind a wife and two young boys, PC Steve Moug decided to rally close friends and fellow police officers to complete a sponsored a 13-mile walk raising funds for Winston's Wish.

Over 50 colleagues and friends, plus 40 youth volunteers, joined forces walking along the beaches and town centre of Ayrshire and a coffee morning was held that went ahead the day before the walk to boost their income target and provide much needed fuel for the participants!

In total the group raised an astounding **£4,824** (and growing) with PC Moug considering making the walk an annual event.

## TAKING ON EVEREST

"Winston's Wish provided amazing support to me and my brother when we lost our dad 25 years ago. They provided us with a memory box that we still cherish to this day and enabled us to meet other young people to talk about our losses and experiences. So, when my friend Callum and I decided to do a 17-day trek to Everest Base Camp, which culminated in us summiting Island Peak at 6189m, we thought it was a great opportunity to raise money for Winston's Wish. Trekking at altitude is a physical challenge which became just as mentally challenging due to the length of time we were trekking. Knowing that we were raising money for such a great charity helped us through our ups and downs and unravelling the Winston's Wish banner at the summit of Island Peak was an incredible feeling, having



achieved our goal. With such amazing support throughout, we raised more money than we ever thought possible. I personally know the amazing work that Winston's Wish do, and we're proud to know that the money we've raised will help young people going through some incredibly hard times. Thank you for the support."

**Jake and Cal**

Inspired to take on your own challenge?  
Visit [winstonswish.org/get-involved](http://winstonswish.org/get-involved)

# HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT BEREAVED CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE



**DONATE  
IN MEMORY**



We are always so proud to honour the memory of your loved ones through your donations. Whether you donate in memory, create a lasting tribute fund or fundraise in memory, your gift means we can continue to support grieving children, young people and their families. Do something special in memory of your important person today.



**JOIN THE WINSTON'S  
WISH LOTTERY**



Join from just £1 a week and you could be in with a chance of winning £25,000 in our weekly Friday draw. The more entries you play, the more chances you have to win, and the more you'll be able to transform a child's life. Enter now and you could be celebrating next week!



**BECOME A COMMUNITY  
AMBASSADOR**



You can help to ensure bereaved families know about us when they need us most. By spreading the word, raising awareness, and inspiring fundraising in your local area, you will help us ensure that no child or young person grieves alone.

## NEED TO SPEAK TO A BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT WORKER?

We're available to support with any advice, questions or to simply listen between the hours of 8am and 8pm, Monday to Friday.



**08088 020 021**



**ASK@WINSTONSWISH.ORG**



**WWW.WINSTONSWISH.ORG**

If you have any questions on anything we have shared or would like to get in touch, email [supportercare@winstonswish.org](mailto:supportercare@winstonswish.org) or call us on 01242 515 157



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