

2023 A Year in Review



A MEMORABLE YEAR

On what was the eve of our 10th Anniversary Year, the year 2023 will always be remembered as a significant milestone for our organisation.

Thanks to the support of Children in Need, not one, but two of our Young Ambassadors were selected to collaborate with them to raise awareness for the work they do and the charities they support.

James was part of The One Show Challenge Squad where he faced his fear of heights, while Hugo showcased how gaming helped him cope with his father's death and maintain a connection with him.

In November, we were recognised as one of the top charities in the UK and were awarded with the King's Award for Voluntary Service.

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Supported By



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charity registration: 1161035

CORONATION CHAMPION

APRIL 2023

What an honour it has been to be crowned a Coronation Champion. The Royal Voluntary Service launched the Coronation Champion Awards alongside Her Majesty The Queen Consort to celebrate volunteers for the work that they do.



Volunteering for Stand-by-me is my biggest pleasure. The work the charity does is invaluable and I know this first hand, as a bereaved child who attended one of the groupwork programmes when my Dad died unexpectedly back in 2017.

As part of the Coronation Champion Award I was able to go to Windsor Castle for the Coronation Concert. At the time my Great Aunt was visiting from Canada, so I took her with me as she is a true ray of sunshine and has helped me immensely. We had the best time, singing and dancing to the music, my favourite being stomping and clapping to Never Forget by Take That, taking in the fascinating production of the Concert and being surrounded by other Champions.

It was a full circle moment when Andrea Bocelli and Sir Bryn Terfel sang You'll Never Walk Alone, which was my Dad's funeral song because he was the biggest Liverpool fan, now his children are. Since being a part of Stand-by-me starting as a young person in a group, becoming a Young Ambassador and now a Group Peer Mentor I realised I was no longer alone.

I spoke with Andy on BBC Three Counties Radio the Morning after the Concert where I shared my story and answered some of his questions about Childhood Bereavement and the work Stand-by-me does. It was a wonderful opportunity and I will continue, for as long as I can, to support Children and Young People who have suffered a bereavement.

BY MIA



WELCOME TO OUR NEW BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT VOLUNTEERS

APRIL 2023

Our team is dedicated to supporting bereaved children, young people and their families in North Herts and Stevenage. In April, we welcomed Guy, Cate, Irene, Sandra, Theresa and Mia to our team after they completed 25 hours of training and took part in one of our Groupwork Programmes. With their diverse backgrounds and personal experiences, our new volunteers have brought a wealth of knowledge to enhance the quality of service we provide.

Our volunteers work closely with bereaved children and their families to provide emotional support, practical advice, and guidance. They also help children and young people cope with their grief by offering them a safe and supportive environment to express their feelings and emotions.

THE BIG HELP OUT - KING'S CORONATION

MAY 2023

To celebrate the Coronation of King Charles III, GoVolHerts, in collaboration with North Herts and Stevenage CVS, arranged a Volunteer Fair on May 12th. In wind and rain, 31 charities, who serve the local area, took part. All the charity stalls looked bright and inviting and the occasion was graced by many Hertfordshire dignitaries. The Lord Lieutenant, Robert Voss CBE, attended for over 2 hours taking time to speak with each charity represented. The High Sheriff of Hertfordshire, Liz Green, The Chair of Herts County Council and the local MP Bim Afolami also attended and spent time in the rain learning about the work of the charities. An event Stand-by-me was proud to attend.



The new design of our logo is intended to reflect the services we provide to bereaved children, young people, and their families. We are committed to providing support when it's needed the most.

As an organisation, we believe that it is important to constantly evolve and adapt to meet the needs of the people we serve. The new logo represents not only our commitment to providing high-quality support to those who are grieving, but also our forward-thinking approach towards the future.

Stand-by-me Bereavement Support remains dedicated to helping children and young people navigate the complex emotions that come with the death of a loved one. Our team of compassionate professionals and volunteers work tirelessly to provide a safe and supportive environment for those who need it most.

We are excited to continue our work in the community and look forward to the many opportunities that lie ahead. Thank you for your continued support as we embark on this new chapter in the history of Stand-by-me Bereavement Support.

OUR NEW LOOK

JUNE 2023

YOUTH SHOWCASE

SEPTEMBER 2023

Stand-by-me was delighted to take part in the first annual Hitchin Youth Showcase organised by the Rotary Club of Hitchin Tilehouse and North Herts Council. 24 youth organisations took part showing the variety of activities and support available to children and young people in Hitchin and the surrounding area. In addition to stands displaying the work of the organisations, there were stage performances across the day. These included a delightful and inspiring display from the Up on Downs group, some stirring music from The Hitchin Youth Brass Band, and various exhibitions of skills from Showtime Circus, the Signing Group and The Market Theatre Group. The event, held in Hitchin Market Square, was well attended and the weather on this occasion was kind.

REMEMBER-ME DAY

SEPTEMBER 2023



On September 24th, we had the pleasure of hosting our annual Remember-me Day, an unforgettable event that gathered friends, family, trustees, and volunteers. The Sadie Centre in Letchworth was the perfect venue for the occasion, and over 100 attendees enjoyed a fantastic barbecue generously provided by the centre.



Our Patron, Billy Byrne from DIY SOS and his wife, Elaine, attended the event and made it even more special by chatting to the children and young people we work with. The afternoon was filled with laughter and energy, as attendees of all ages participated in a lively Garden City Samba workshop.



As we watched the doves take flight, we were reminded of the beauty of the day. It was a perfect opportunity for everyone to come together, honour their loved ones, write a message of remembrance to add to our Remember-me Arch and enjoy each other's company under the warm summer sun.



TRAINING SESSIONS FOR EARLY YEARS STAFF: BUILDING LIFE CHANCES GRANT BY HCC

NOVEMBER 2023

Thanks to the HCC's Building Life Chances grant, Our Clinical Service Manager, Karen Stanton and Bereavement Support Manager, Lisa Lowe conducted several training sessions for Early Years staff. The training covered the essential skills required when working with bereaved young children and their families and provided practical ideas and activities that they could use within their settings.

The feedback received was overwhelmingly positive with 96% of the attendees sharing that they felt that the session had made a big difference in their confidence when working with bereaved children and their families.



As a charity supported by Children in Need, we were approached in 2022 to identify young people who we have supported to share their story on a potential project about mental health and gaming. We nominated Hugo, who used gaming as a coping mechanism to manage his grief following the death of his father. Although the project did not proceed in 2022, in 2023 it was revisited and resulted in a Game to Give programme on BBC3. We were contacted again by Children in Need in May 2023 to nominate another young person who could potentially participate in one of their fundraising projects in November. We put forward James, who went on to be part of The One Show Challenge Squad, facing his fear of heights. In the following account, you'll discover why they chose to participate and how things went for them.

HUGO

Working alongside BBC CiN was a great opportunity for me to highlight childhood bereavement and how gaming can help children through such a tough time. This is a subject that often goes unmentioned, so one that was great to bring to the forefront of conversation.

To be able to do this alongside my passion for gaming was even better. Although this provoked some raw emotions I was proud to do it as part of my role as a Stand-by-me Young Ambassador. Not just for me but for all the other bereaved young people out there.



BY HUGO



Where do I even start? What a past few months I have had. For those of you who may not have seen it, I was one of four young people making up BBC One's The One Show Challenge Squad for Children In Need. We have all benefited from a charity supported by Children In Need. As part of the Challenge Squad, we had to complete something that would be challenging for us as individuals.

JAMES

With a fear of heights, I had to take on the Spurs Sky Walk and abseil down the stadium, then complete the hilliest part of Vernon Kay's Ultra Ultra Marathon. I have overcome some fears! Not just conquering heights, but talking about my struggles in front of millions.

I have met some incredible people and found out about other young people's difficult situations. It has made me aware of not just kids struggling with grief and loss, but with medical issues, mental struggles, and those supporting their families.

In total, we raised over £3m on the One Show, plus £6m with Vernon's Ultra Ultra Marathon. That puts a smile on my face because I know that the money we raised will go to some incredible charities like Stand-by-me. I couldn't be more grateful to Stand-by-me for this opportunity. Thank you!

BY JAMES



The King's Award for Voluntary Service

RECEIVING THE KING'S AWARD FOR VOLUNTARY SERVICE

NOVEMBER 2023

We are thrilled to share that our charity was recognised in November as one of the first in the UK to be awarded the King's Award for Voluntary Service. This prestigious accolade is the highest honour a local voluntary group can receive in the UK, equivalent to an MBE.

We want to acknowledge and express our deep gratitude to all our volunteers. Your incredible dedication, passion, and selflessness have made a tremendous impact on the lives of the children, young people and families we serve.

You are all amazing individuals who truly make a difference.

BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT TRAINING FOR CONTACT-ME SCHOOLS

JANUARY - NOVEMBER 2023

Our Bereavement Support Manager, Lisa Lowe, has provided thirteen Contact-me Schools with specialised in-house training to support their pastoral teams. The sessions provided critical information and guidance to staff working with bereaved children. The training was tailored to each school's unique needs and circumstances, ensuring maximum benefit to all.

If you would like more information about becoming a Contact-me School or how we can provide in-house training for your school, please contact lisa@stand-by-me.org.uk

Reflecting on My First Year as Chairperson

CAROL READ



It's hard to believe that a whole year has passed since I became the chairperson of Stand-by-me. Looking back, it's been an incredible year. Our young ambassadors, James and Hugo, were chosen by Children in Need to represent us and they did an amazing job. It was an honour to see how well they represented our charity. Our dedicated volunteers were awarded the King's Award for Voluntary Service, which was a well-deserved recognition of their hard work. Their contributions go above and beyond for Stand-by-me and make it the exceptional charity that it is. I'm incredibly proud to be a part of such an incredible organisation. I want to extend my gratitude to all the volunteers, staff, trustees, and families for their support during my first year as chairperson. I couldn't have done it without all of you.

WHAT WE ACHIEVED IN 2023



Stand-by-me
Bereavement Support

176

Professionals trained in bereavement support

168

Referrals received from parents, carers, schools and & Health Professionals

114

Families supported via our helpline

54

Children & Young People attended our groupwork programme

Over

3000

Visitors to our website

45

Parent/carers attended our group programme

FUNDRAISERS

TV STARS REUNITE AT STAND-BY-ME CHRISTMAS QUIZ NIGHT

NOVEMBER 2023

A Christmas quiz night held at Whitehill Junior School in Hitchin was a memorable event, featuring a reunion between two local TV stars. Billy Byrne, known for his role on DIY SOS, and Adam Astill, who starred as surgeon Dan Hamilton in Holby City, both participated in the charity event.



STEVE MILLS, BILLY BYRNE,
ADAM ASTILL

Billy, a patron of Stand-by-Me, also worked behind the scenes as part of the camera and electrical department on Holby City. Meanwhile, Adam has appeared in several prime time shows since leaving Holby in 2012. At the quiz night, Adam co-hosted the event and Billy was a member of one of the teams. During the half-time break, the two caught up and reminisced about their time working on the show.

The successful quiz night, which drew over 100 contestants, raised more than £1,300 to help support bereaved children and young people in North Herts and Stevenage.



THE WINNING TEAM - ICKLEFORD MASSIVE

**Thank you to everyone who came along
to support the event and to
Steve Mills, Head Teacher of Whitehill
School, for letting us use the school
hall.**

SUPPORT US WITH A MONTHLY DONATION



Regular donations can help us keep supporting bereaved children, young people, and their families. Setting up a monthly gift by Direct Debit is also a convenient and hassle-free way to contribute to the vital work we do. Visit standbyme.enthuse.com/donate to fill in your information and choose the amount you wish to give.

Thank you for your generosity!

SOME IMPORTANT DATES FOR 2024

A DECADE OF DEDICATION: OUR 10TH ANNIVERSARY IS HERE!

We're thrilled that 2024 marks our ten-year anniversary. To commemorate this significant milestone, we have some exciting plans in the works. Stay tuned for updates and events by regularly checking the News section on our website at www.stand-by-me.org.uk.

SAVE THE DATE

1st June

King's Award for Voluntary Service Presentation

30th November
(tbc)

Quiz Night

1st September

Remember-me Day

Dates - TBC

**Football Tournament
Sponsored Swim**

WANT TO KEEP UP WITH WHAT WE ARE DOING IN 2024?



Follow us on:



stand-by-me.org.uk

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

AUSTIN'S FAMILY FUNERAL DIRECTORS

MAY 2023



We had the pleasure of meeting Claire and David from Austin's Family Funeral Directors, who thoughtfully nominated Stand-by-me for the Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management donation.

We are pleased to announce that we have received an incredible £12,000! This generous contribution will help us to continue our support for bereaved children, young people, and their families in North Herts and Stevenage.

SETTLE GROUP

SEPTEMBER 2023

We are grateful to the Settle Group in Letchworth for selecting us as their Charity of the Year 2023-24. To kick off our collaboration, Settle organised a volunteer day where their employees updated our kitchen and group room. The transformation was impressive, and it has greatly improved how we use both spaces.

Settle have been actively fundraising throughout the year at their Letchworth office, and they have more exciting plans in store. We appreciate their support and dedication to our cause.



CO-OP COMMUNITY FUND DONATION

OCTOBER 2023



The Co-op Local Community Fund provides support to various projects throughout the United Kingdom, which are important to its members.

In 2023, our project was fortunate enough to be selected as a recipient. Thanks to the Co-op's customers who chose us as their charity of choice while shopping, we received an amazing £3822.00 in October.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

CHESFIELD DOWNS LADY'S CAPTAIN 2023 - CHARITY OF THE YEAR JANUARY - DECEMBER 2023

We were lucky enough to be chosen by Hazel Brunnen the 2023 Chesfield Downs Lady's Captain to be her Charity of the year. We asked Hazel to let us know why she chose us. This is what she said:

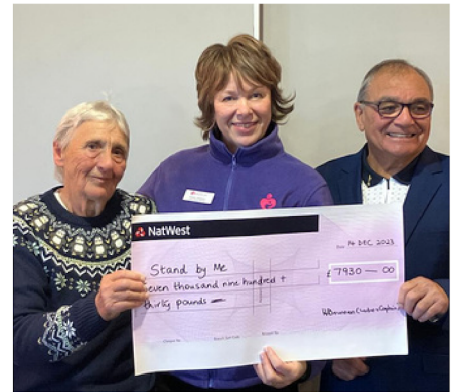
'Eighteen months ago, I came across an article on social media outlining the therapeutic work undertaken by Stand-by-me. I immediately knew this was the charity I wished to support during my 2023 captain's year at Chesfield Downs Golf Club. I was widowed thirty-five years ago and had four children of primary school age.

Back in 1989 there was little support available to them. An organisation such as yours would have eased their journey to coming to terms with their grief, feelings of confusion and loss.

The ladies' section of our golf club were incredibly generous and supportive by sponsoring fundraising events, my 54 holes of golf in one day, attending talks from friends and family on various topics, donating prizes for raffles, tombola, new and nearly new items of both crafts and clothing.

It was a real pleasure for all of us to be able to raise some funds towards your invaluable work, and to meet your representatives at some of our events.

May your good work continue to thrive in your efforts to support the young people and families in our community.'



BY HAZEL BRUNNEN,
LADIES CAPTAIN 2023

**Thank you for your amazing donation
of £7930.00**

THINKING OF SUPPORTING A CHARITY IN 2024?



Stand-by-me relies on donations and grants for 95% of our income. Each contribution helps us to provide vital support to more grieving children, young people, and their families in North Herts & Stevenage.

Visit our website to learn about the many ways you can support us in 2024.

stand-by-me.org.uk/support-us/

ONE BIG THANK YOU

JANUARY - DECEMBER 2023

As a charity, Stand-by-me relies on donations from members of the local community and grants from funders such as Children in Need and Global Makes Some Noise. Without this we would be unable to offer the support we provide to bereaved children and young people in North Herts and Stevenage.

We would like to say a Big Thank you to the following organisations and individuals who have donated. Their generosity has allowed us to continue our vital work and make a positive difference in the lives of those who need it most. We are grateful for every donation, no matter how big or small. Together, we can make a real difference to the lives of bereaved children and young people in our community

We also want to express our appreciation to the volunteers who give their time and energy to help us deliver our services. Their dedication and commitment are invaluable and we couldn't do what we do without them.

MELBOURN &
MELDRETH
WOMEN'S
GROUP

THE ROCK
CHOIR

MIKE
MAKENZIE

HITCHIN
YOUTH
TRUST

ST MARKS
CHURCH

PROBUS

MRS T
ROBERTS

MRS A
COTTERILL

ACCESS
SELF
STORAGE

STUART
PLEDGE
MNP

MR N CLIVES

MR & MRS
BAKER

THANK YOU

