



## Issue 6

### Update on Recent Support Initiatives:

With thanks to the generosity of our donors and supporters, we are proud to share an update on the impactful support initiatives we've delivered throughout the last 12 months.

Touching the lives of hundreds of children and families in need, below is an example of how we have been able to provide hope, relief, and essential resources

### Therapy and Family Support::

- Over 140 Hydrotherapy and Physiotherapy Sessions: Providing critical physical therapy to improve mobility, strength, and well-being for children with physical disabilities.
- 106 Family Holidays: Offering much-needed getaways for families, giving them respite and quality time away from daily challenges.
- 50 Family Respite Breaks: These breaks provided vital relief for children and their caregivers and ensured positive shared experiences.
- We have assisted 17 families with Spending Contributions (£100 each): Supporting family expenses during these breaks
- 30 £50 Food Vouchers: Helping families struggling with food insecurity, allowing access to basic and essential supplies.
- Assistance with Rent Arrears: Providing critical support to families facing financial hardship through social services.
- Hospital Travel Costs: Helping families manage expenses related to essential medical visits.



### Educational and Creative Resources:

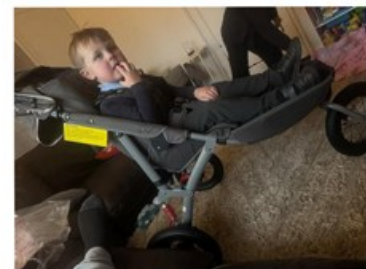
- 2 Laptops: Supporting children's educational needs with essential digital access.
- Specialist Backpack and 4 Pairs of Children's Spectacles: Tailoring support to improve mobility and visual needs.
- 6 DSLR Cameras: These are enabling photography classes for 32 children currently and approximately 60 more in 2025, fostering creativity and new skills.
- 20 iPads for SEN Schools: Enhancing learning and communication for children with special needs.
- 4 Speech and Language iPads with Software: Enabling improved communication for children with speech challenges.



Each of these initiatives reflects our commitment to empowering and supporting families, enhancing accessibility, and improving quality of life for children facing significant challenges. Through these efforts, we are truly making a difference in communities and lives each day. Thank you for your support in helping make all this possible.

### Accessibility and Mobility Assistance:

- Wheelchair Electric Adaptation, 3 Electric Wheelchairs, and 2 Manual Wheelchairs: Providing mobility solutions to enhance independence.
- 3 Specialist Strollers: Supporting children with mobility challenges.
- 2 Ipad Voice Devices: Offering communication support for children with limited verbal abilities.



### School Support and Adaptations:

- School Transport: Supporting access to education.
- Disabled Toilet for SEN School: Ensuring accessibility for students with physical disabilities.
- Safe Seating for a SEN School: Ensuring safe, comfortable support for students.
- Sensory Equipment for 2 SEN Schools: Enhancing sensory experiences for children with disabilities.

### Home and Comfort Support:

- Sensory Projector and £25,000 for Sensory Equipment: Enhancing sensory experiences for children with disabilities.
- Reinforced Sofa, Bed Settee, and 3 Bunk Beds with Mattresses: Providing comfortable, safe spaces in family homes.
- 2 Washing Machines and Fridge Freezer: Supporting basic home needs for families.
- Specialist Leg Straps
- Medical Equipment Storage Shed: Offering secure, organised storage for essential medical supplies.

### We also operate an Emotional and Practical Support Line seven days a week.

Talking through challenges can be incredibly healing. Emotional support is vital for anyone facing difficult times, helping individuals maintain a positive outlook and build resilience. Seeking support is a strength, not a weakness, and connecting with those who understand can make a world of difference. We also guide families through practical tasks and provide support in the most challenging times. When a child faces a life-threatening or terminal illness, we're here for the entire family—parents, siblings, and grandparents.

## Providing Respite and Holidays

This season, we will provide respite breaks for over 110 families and family holidays for 60 families. A short break away is often key for the survival of family relationships during the roller-coaster ride of childhood illnesses. For this reason, we feel that it is very important to give families the quality time together that they so desperately need, away from hospitals, doctors, and treatment. 1 of our 3 holiday homes is situated at Butlins Caravan Village, Skegness and 2 are situated at Haven's Golden Sands Holiday Park, Mablethorpe. We are now able provide respite and holidays for between 170 and 190 deserving families each year. The Parks have amenities to suit all ages whether rain or shine, they are wheelchair friendly throughout and are within proximity to all the amenities and the beach. All our holiday homes are adapted for the disabled and well equipped throughout, each having the following: Wheelchair access ramp, Hoist in Main Bedroom, Adapted Wet Room, Lowered work surfaces, Double and Single bed in main bedroom, lowered light switches and sockets, Wheelchair access to each room, Extra wide sliding doors, fully accessible throughout, Central Heating and Double glazing.

### \* New for 2025 \*

We have upgraded our oldest respite home at Haven for a newer, modern and more practical unit.

**The Total annual running costs for our 3 Holiday homes for 2025 will be between £32,591.00 and £35,191.00**



## Toby Richardson

We are dedicated to supporting Toby until he turns 18 in March 2028, (at which point our charity's constitution requires us to conclude our assistance.)

Toby's transformation from a life-changing diagnosis to becoming one of the world's top junior wheelchair racers is truly inspiring. His goal is to represent Team GB at the 2028 Paralympic Games in Los Angeles.

To maintain Toby's progress toward his dream, we are seeking funding for his costs throughout 2025.

This will cover vital training, equipment, and participation in international events, essential for his growth as an elite athlete.

Toby's journey is not only about physical preparation but also mental resilience.

The funding will cover daily training, travel to specialised camps, international competition participation, and necessary equipment upgrades.

These things are crucial for Toby to remain competitive and to improve his global ranking, with international exposure offering him the best opportunities to develop.

### **Toby's Requirements:**

#### **Enhanced Training:**

Professional coaching will refine Toby's skills, improve performance, and expand his abilities in events like Javelin, Shot Put, and Discus.

Access to elite training camps in Switzerland, Belgium, and the UK will provide top-tier coaching and competition.

#### **Competitive Edge:**

Regular international camps and competitions will expose Toby to world-class athletes, challenging him to improve and stay at the forefront of his sport.

#### **Mental & Physical Preparation:**

Specialised equipment and coaching will ensure Toby is mentally and physically ready for each race, reducing injury risks and optimising performance.

#### **Time Sensitivity:**

2025 is critical in Toby's development as an athlete. The skills he hones now will be pivotal for his Paralympic success, making timely funding essential.

Toby has been accepted on to the Welsh athletics performance pathway to represent Wales as part of team GB.

Toby's decision to go with Wales is that they have offered him better support, structure and leadership compared to England.

In addition, it is also possible that on condition that Toby makes it to the next stage, which we all believe that there is no doubt that he will, they will begin to help finance him if he gets podium in championship events.

Please follow this link to the Welsh athletics where you will find his name on the pathway

**Toby now has his own website at [www.tobyrichardson.uk](http://www.tobyrichardson.uk)**

## Detailed 2025 Budget:

### **Everyday Costs:**

Fuel: £5,200.00

For travel to training and local competitions.

Personal Trainer: £3,360.00

Tailored training regimes for Toby's needs.

Coach Fees: £600.00

Ongoing coaching essential for his development.

Athletics Membership: £25.00

Required for competition access.

Gym Membership: £420.00

Access to strength and conditioning facilities.

**Total: £9,605.00**

### **Event Costs:**

Event Entry Fees: £750.00

Registration for races during the April-September season.

Switzerland Camp: £3,500.00

High-altitude training with specialised coaching.

Marcell Camp: £1,000.00

Advanced training and competition in Europe.

Belgium Camp: £2,000.00

Training with international competitors.

Monthly Coach Training: £2,400.00

Elite monthly training in Telford.

London Mini Marathon: £300.00

Key race for maintaining competitive edge.

**Total: £9,950.00**

### **One-Off Kit Costs:**

Rear Tyres: £1,000.00

Front Tyres: £300.00

Helmet: £50.00

Garmin Speed O: £350.00

Rollers Cadis Sensor: £50.00

Heart Rate Sensor & Strap: £80.00

**Total: £1,830**



## **The Total Amount Required to Support Toby Throughout 2025: £21,385**

Your support in 2025 will not only empower Toby to compete at the highest levels but also invest in the future of a young athlete who embodies resilience and determination.

Together, we can help Toby achieve his Paralympic dream, inspiring others along the way.

Thank you for reading this. Your generosity could make a lasting impact on Toby's journey.

## A selection of our current projects

### Ki Mobility Little Wave Flip XP Wheelchair for Mohamed:



We are currently seeking funding for Mohamed, a 4-year-old boy who is receiving treatment for leukemia. Mohamed also suffers from epilepsy, hypoxic-ischemic encephalopathy (HIE), dystonia, paralysis, and blindness.

Due to Mohamed's complex medical needs, he requires frequent hospital visits, both for routine appointments and emergency care.

Given his young age and medical conditions, carrying him is not practical, and he has recently been assessed for a specialised wheelchair.

His healthcare team has recommended the Ki Mobility Little Wave Flip XP, a paediatric wheelchair that would provide both comfort and ease of transport, making it ideal for Mohamed's regular hospital trips.

The Ki Mobility Little Wave Flip XP is specifically designed for young children, offering innovative features that enhance both comfort and functionality.

This lightweight, compact wheelchair offers various support options such as tilt-in-space seating, reclining functionality, and height-adjustable armrests to ensure both comfort and

proper positioning for children with mobility needs. It can be easily folded for transport and storage, and it can be safely secured in vehicles—features that make it ideal for Mohamed's frequent hospital journeys.

**The total cost for the wheelchair and necessary accessories is £9,505.83.**

Any contribution you could make towards securing this essential equipment would be deeply appreciated.

### Symmetrikit Tiltrite Chair for Jhye:

We are seeking financial support to purchase a Symmetrikit Tiltrite Chair for Jhye, a 4-year-old boy from Suffolk diagnosed with Cerebral Palsy and classified as GMFCS Level 5. Cerebral Palsy GMFCS Level 5 is the most severe classification in the Gross Motor Function Classification System (GMFCS), which is used to describe the motor abilities of individuals with cerebral palsy. It helps categorise the level of mobility and physical independence based on functional limitations. Jhye currently uses a feeding chair at home, which is unsuitable for his broader needs.

The NHS is unable to provide a more appropriate option. When Jhye is not in his feeding chair, he is often on the floor, where he is uncomfortable, or confined to his bed, which isolates him from meaningful interactions with his family in the living room. We hope to secure a specialised chair for Jhye that will offer him the necessary postural support while also providing a comfortable space to relax during downtime. This chair will enable him to watch TV, interact with his family, and spend quality time with his little sister in a shared, inclusive environment. During a recent assessment, Jhye had the opportunity to try a

Symmetrikit Tiltrite Chair. The visible joy and comfort he experienced during the trial highlighted the inadequacy of his current seating. This specialised chair offers exceptional postural support, comfort, and adjustability for individuals with complex needs, promoting better alignment, pressure relief, and independence. By providing Jhye with this chair, we can significantly improve his quality of life. He will no longer need to rely on his bed for comfort and can actively participate in family activities, fostering stronger emotional connections and a greater sense of inclusion.

The total cost of the chair is £4,524.

Any contribution, no matter how small, would be immensely appreciated and would bring us closer to making this life-changing support a reality for Jhye.



### Acheeva work stations, Eyegaze Systems and Sensory Equipment for Wilson Stuart Special Educational Needs (SEN) School in Erdington:

With thanks to the generosity of our donors and supporters in 2023/24, we were able to provide crucial equipment to Wilson Stuart (SEN) School in Erdington, Birmingham.

The school's outstanding facilities and dedicated staff deliver specialised programs tailored to each pupil's needs.

In 2024 we were invited to visit the school, we were profoundly moved by the passion and dedication of the staff, who expressed heartfelt gratitude for the equipment we provided. The impact of our visit was heightened when we saw students using the items we had donated. In one classroom, students performed "Let It Go" from Frozen, a touching moment that made it clear how much our support means to them.

During our tour, we learned that the school still requires more Acheeva Learning Stations, Eyegaze systems, specialised seating and sensory equipment.

We are therefore seeking funding for 2 Acheeva learning Stations, 1 Eyegaze System, 10 Specialised seats and Multiple Sensory Equipment.

#### Acheeva Learning Stations:

These stations support students with complex needs by providing a comfortable and adjustable learning environment. They help in positioning the students correctly, which is crucial for their physical and cognitive development.

#### Eyegaze Systems:

These systems enable non-verbal children to communicate and interact with their environment through eye movements. They foster independence and self-expression, which are vital for the children's emotional and social development.

#### Specialised Seating Solutions:

Proper seating solutions are crucial for the physical health and comfort of children with disabilities. They aid in posture, support, and prevent secondary health complications.

#### Sensory Equipment:

Sensory equipment provides multi-sensory stimulation, which is essential for children with sensory processing issues. It helps in calming, focusing, and engaging them, thereby enhancing their learning and interaction.



#### Budget

Acheeva Learning Stations x 2	@£7,509.60	£15,019.20
Eyegaze System x 1	@£7,568.63	£7,568.63
Specialised Seating x 10	@ £250.00	£2,500.00
Sensory Equipment x 5 Items		£7,000.00
<b>Total</b>		<b>£32,087.83</b>



## Frankie Sensory Garden Equipment:

We are seeking funding to create a sensory garden for a young child named Frankie, who was born prematurely and faces multiple challenges, including down syndrome, spinal Hyperextension, hyper-mobile joints, and lower muscle tone.

Frankie's conditions mean she requires constant care and supervision. She struggles with basic motor skills and often experiences frustration and anger, leading to self-harm.

Her occupational therapist has recommended a garden sensory area, which would be a safe and peaceful space where she can receive the sensory inputs that help to soothe and calm her.

The creation of this sensory garden will provide Frankie with a much-needed safe space where she can explore, learn and develop essential skills while managing her emotional and physical challenges.

Each item has carefully selected to address her specific needs, offering her the opportunity to experience growth, joy, and a sense of calm in her daily life.

We kindly request your support in funding this project, which will make a significant difference in Frankie's life, offering the tools she needs to thrive despite her challenges.

Your contribution will bring a smile to her face and provide her with the resources she needs to grow and flourish.

The total cost for the specialised sensory equipment, which includes a bench planter, soft shapes house, bell flower, calming cocoon, wooden painting easel, mud kitchen, sandpit with cover, and a children's bowling alley is £4,053.



## Hydrotherapy & Physiotherapy Sessions:



We have an ever-increasing list of children waiting for Hydrotherapy and Physiotherapy sessions to help them recover from various ailments, we constantly, have over 20 children on our waiting list. (We provided over 140 sessions during 2024).

Hydrotherapy is ideal for people with disabilities who have limited mobility or movement in parts of their body, or who have undergone surgery and need rehabilitation. Hydrotherapy is also necessary for children with cerebral palsy, for its ability to improve muscle strength with freedom of movement, but not limited to children with specific conditions, it is a way of exercising with less stress on the joints, bones, and muscles as in the water the body is buoyant and does not have to support its own weight.

The pool is also set to a warm temperature of around 32-34 degrees to increase circulation, relax the muscles and decreases swelling, help with muscle spasms, and reduce or remove pain, including arthritis pain. Physiotherapists work with children and their families to identify movement and functional difficulties. They aim to help the child to manage their physical symptoms and achieve functional mobility. They assess, treat, and advise on exercises and activities which the

child can do with their family and in school.

Each Hydrotherapy Session or Physio Session costs £90.00. Our aim is to help as many of these children as possible.

**To provide 6 sessions for 1 child costs £540.00, 6 sessions for 10 children costs £5,400.00.**

Any help you could provide will be greatly received

## Horticultural Project for multiple Children:

We are currently seeking funding for a children's horticultural project in Devon, which offers a unique opportunity for children, particularly those who are neurodiverse or have additional needs, to engage with nature, learn about plants, and participate in environmental sustainability.

This inclusive initiative ensures that children facing physical, emotional, or social disadvantages can fully benefit from these experiences. The project is based at a rural site in South Devon, featuring a young woodland, a strawbale barn, and designated growing spaces. The site is fully accessible, with ramped facilities, toilets, and showers, allowing children with mobility challenges to enjoy the environment.

The site is a hub for fostering biodiversity and promoting well-being.

A cornerstone of the project is "land and plant therapy", which enables children to connect with nature, improve their emotional well-being, and cultivate a sense of responsibility for the environment.

The site also includes an orchard of locally sourced fruit trees and community-growing spaces for herbs and dye plants, enriching the children's environmental education. The children benefiting from this project come from various areas across Devon and beyond, including Torquay, Paignton, Plymouth, and Exeter. By expanding its reach, the project aims to provide even more children with the therapeutic and educational benefits of gardening and nature.

Recently, we facilitated access to the site for wheelchair users by providing an all-terrain mobility scooter. We also supplied safe gardening tools tailored for children, further enhancing their participation.

Due to the project's success, it is expanding to accommodate a growing number of participants, creating an urgent need for additional resources to ensure all children can fully engage with the activities and enjoy its benefits.

**We are seeking a total of £8,735 in funding to cover the following:**



- Raised wooden growing beds to enable children to garden comfortably.
  - Safe plastic gardening tools (trowels, forks, spades, watering cans).
  - Small tool bags to organise equipment.
  - Wellington boots for use in muddy conditions.
  - A storage shed to keep tools and the mobility scooter secure and accessible. **The cost of these items is £5,258.**
- Additionally, we aim to refurbish a recently donated yurt to make it wheelchair-accessible and functional as a space for craft activities, day visits, and overnight stays. Positioned near a serene pond, the yurt will feature a wood-burning stove with a fire guard, creating a warm and welcoming environment. **The refurbishment costs are £3,477.**

**We appreciate that we cannot help everybody, but with your help, we can help so many more.**

**Thank you for taking the time and interest to read through our latest newsletter.**

You can find more information regarding all our projects on our website: [makethemsmile.org.uk](http://makethemsmile.org.uk)

If you feel you can help or would like to donate to any of our projects, you can do this by bank transfer direct to our bank account or at any Lloyds Bank, our details are

**Sort Code 77-72-25 - Account number 40723568**

or alternatively, by visiting our website: [www.makethemsmile.org.uk](http://www.makethemsmile.org.uk) and click on the **donate** button.