

# Impact Report

2017/18



**The Sick  
Children's  
Trust**

we're here, so you can be there

# About us

We believe every family with a seriously ill child in hospital should be able to stay together, just minutes from their child's bedside during their treatment.

## Our mission

The Sick Children's Trust believes keeping families together significantly improves the recovery of seriously ill children. We provide free, high-quality 'Home from Home' accommodation, as well as emotional and practical support, to families with sick children in hospital in the UK.

Every day, children are diagnosed with serious and life-threatening illnesses or have terrible accidents that leave them fighting for life.

They often have to be transferred to specialist hospitals far from home to receive critical medical treatment. Life for their whole family is suddenly thrown into complete turmoil.

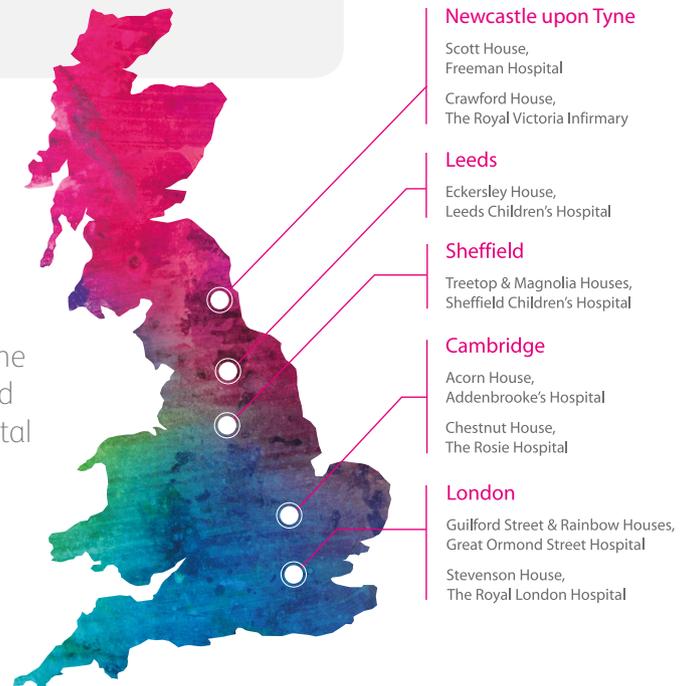
The Sick Children's Trust helps to alleviate some of the emotional and financial strains on families at a very stressful time.

Founded in 1982 by two paediatric specialists, The Sick Children's Trust is

the longest-serving charity providing 'Home from Home' accommodation in the UK.

We now have ten 'Homes from Home' providing an essential service for up to 147 families every night, 365 days a year.

Whilst staying at one of our 'Homes from Home' is free of charge for families, it costs us £30 to support a family for one night. We rely entirely on voluntary donations to meet this cost.





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The most important people in a child’s life are the parents. ‘Homes from Home’ allow parents the opportunity to be there when a child’s need is greatest – when they are sick. This means that parents have more time for their child and spend less time worrying about how they will get through the day. The Sick Children’s Trust makes children better sooner.

**Isabel Hemmings, Chief Operating Officer,  
Sheffield Children’s NHS Foundation Trust**

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# Welcome from our President Michael Crawford CBE

Thankfully most families never have to experience the pain of having a seriously ill child, and the stress and trauma which that brings. But across the country, every day, babies are born very early or very sick, and children are involved in accidents or have serious illnesses that mean they need lifesaving treatment. This treatment is carried out by leading clinicians at specialist children's hospitals, hospitals which may be hours or hundreds of miles away from a family's home. In this situation the worry of where to stay and how to cope with a child's hospitalisation piles additional pressure onto families who are already struggling to cope.

That's where The Sick Children's Trust steps in. The charity provides free, high-quality 'Home from Home' accommodation, as well as emotional and practical support, which means families can stay together while their child receives lifesaving treatment in hospital.

The Sick Children's Trust believes that no child should face a lengthy hospital stay alone. They need their family by their side to support their treatment, aiding their recovery and journey back home.

**I still remember being left alone on a hospital ward as a child after I underwent surgery. I was terrified as I waited for my mother to collect me, a wait that felt like an eternity. The relief when she walked through the doors and gave me a kiss and a hug was overwhelming. The love of parents and family is one of the most important medicines.**

Families also need time away from the hospital intensive care wards, from the beeping of machines, the bustle of ward

rounds and the sights and smells which can be overwhelming at an already stressful time.

Our ten 'Homes from Home' are located just minutes from the paediatric wards at leading children's hospitals, with direct phone lines in each room so families can be contacted day or night if their child's condition changes. If that phone rings, they can be by their child's side within minutes.

I am so incredibly proud of the impact The Sick Children's Trust has on families' lives. Last year we supported 3,785 families with some of the country's sickest children, providing a vital lifeline at a time of such emotional strain.

And together, with your help, we can continue to be here for families, to ensure that no child has to go through lengthy hospital treatment without their family by their side.



Michael Crawford



## Our values

### Support

We put the needs of children and their families at the centre of everything we do.

### Commitment

We are dedicated to making a real difference to families with sick children.

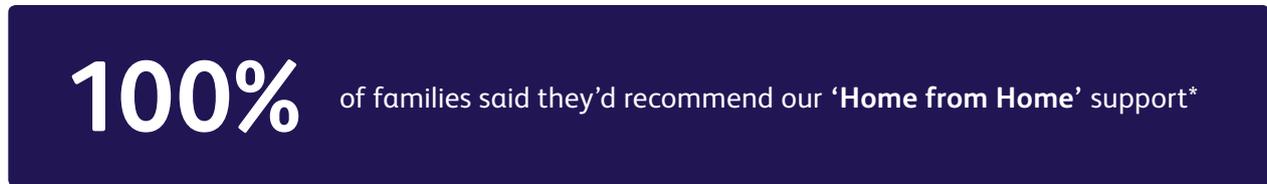
### Excellence

Our reputation is built on people wanting to work with and support us.

### Sustainability

We use our energy, skills and resources to work efficiently and deliver results.

# Making an impact 2017/18



\* Percentages throughout document taken from our 2017/18 family feedback forms and occupancy statistics.

# Providing high-quality practical and emotional support within our 'Homes from Home'

## A helping hand in a time of need

Every year, we provide emotional and practical support to around 4,000 families. However far they have had to travel, the families that arrive at the doors of our 'Homes from Home' are traumatised: they have a seriously ill child in hospital and need to know that they never have to be more than a few minutes away from their bedside.

At a time of deep uncertainty and fear we minimise the practical concerns for families and alleviate some of the emotional strain, enabling them to focus solely on their child. With our trained house staff at hand to answer any queries, keep the houses running smoothly, and offer comfort, we can be there for families for the days, weeks or months they need our support.

**99%**

**of families** felt having the opportunity to stay in a private room helped them cope with the strain of having a seriously ill child in hospital.

**99%**

**of families** found the support the house staff gave was important.

## Darcie-May, aged one, from Middlesbrough

Darcie-May was born with hypoplastic left heart syndrome – a serious heart defect, which meant she would be in hospital from the day she was born and would need numerous surgeries.

For seven months she was treated on the Children's Heart Unit at Freeman Hospital in Newcastle upon Tyne and for the duration of her stay Darcie-May's parents, Nathan and Zara, were given a room in Scott House.

This meant they were never more than a couple of minutes from their

daughter's hospital bedside and could be with her in moments when her condition changed or decisions needed to be made about her treatment. It also gave a place of comfort and quiet, where they could rest and regain focus by speaking to the house staff and other families about their experiences.

As Darcie-May's treatment progressed, she was able to visit Scott House with her parents, which gave the family a sense of normality away from the clinical hospital environment.



“ Having a child in hospital completely changes your life, it has been the most stressful thing we’ve ever known. But The Sick Children’s Trust lifted a huge weight off our shoulders. Rather than making a long, stressful trip from our home in Middlesbrough every day, we were right here by Darcie-May’s side. We never had the stress of not being there for our daughter or the anxiety that we wouldn’t reach her in time. We could share every hour of every day together as a family.

**Nathan Fox, Darcie-May’s Dad**



“ When the physio arrives on the ward it only takes a few minutes for both my wife and I to be there by Nehel’s side. Having three younger daughters means we would have struggled without Eckersley House. Staying here has meant one of us can be on the ward with Nehel at all times, and that we’ve had plenty of time to get used to her new treatment plan. We are hopeful that because of the support of The Sick Children’s Trust, we will get Nehel back home sooner. ”

**Waqas Mushtaq,  
Nehel’s Dad**

# Improving the recovery of seriously ill children

## Supporting families to care for their child

The majority of families we support have children who are undergoing complex treatment. As such, the recovery process is often a long one and children may be discharged from hospital still requiring medical interventions like oxygen via a nasogastric tube or formula feeds through a jejunostomy, or with ongoing rehabilitation programmes.

Parents and carers staying in our 'Homes from Home' are never more than a few moments from their child's bedside, ensuring they can play an active role in their child's treatment. They can learn to give medication, take part in personal care and physiotherapy, and practice using medical equipment under clinical supervision. Not only does this have a significant impact on the child's recovery, but it can also mean they are able to leave hospital sooner, as parents learn vital skills that will help them care for their child's medical and rehabilitation needs at home.

**99%** of families said that having the whole family close by was beneficial for their child's wellbeing and recovery.

**90%** of families played an active role in their child's care whilst they were in hospital.

**60%** gave medication.

**46%** learned to use medical equipment.

## Nehel, aged ten, from Wakefield, West Yorkshire

Parents Andleeh and Waqas, along with their other three children, have been staying in Eckersley House in Leeds.

Their eldest daughter, Nehel, suffers from complex medical conditions and was admitted to hospital with a serious chest and viral infection. Since then, her Mum and Dad have been hands-on in her treatment, learning how to perform complex oral suction techniques, take part in physiotherapy, and administer

her medication. This is essential, as Nehel cannot be discharged until her complex needs can be cared for at home by her family and community support teams.

Becoming confident in Nehel's new medical procedures would have been much more difficult

without our 'Home from Home' accommodation, as the family would have struggled to split their time between Leeds Children's Hospital and their home, which is almost an hour away. Nehel has also had the company and support of her three sisters, which has helped to lift her mood.

# Reducing financial concerns during a hospital stay

## Providing a practical solution

For many families, just thinking about the costs associated with having a sick child in hospital miles from home can be utterly overwhelming – finding the money to pay for the B&B or hotel that will keep them close to their seriously ill child, the high costs of transport or hospital car parking, even buying cups of tea every day from a vending machine or meals in a hospital canteen.

Our 'Homes from Home' stop families having to worry about how they will fund a hospital stay by providing them with free accommodation, as well as living facilities like kitchens, dining rooms and laundry areas, just minutes from their child.

**66%** of families experienced financial worries surrounding their child's stay in hospital before finding out about our 'Homes from Home'.

**99%** of families who had financial concerns during their child's stay in hospital **felt that staying in the 'Home from Home' helped to ease these concerns.**

## Asher, aged two, from Uxbridge, Middlesex

Asher spent 655 nights as an inpatient at Great Ormond Street Hospital, London, and has extremely complex health conditions and medical needs.

For the duration of his stay, Asher's parents, David and Helen, as well as sister Erin, were supported at Guilford Street House with free 'Home from Home' accommodation, which helped to ease their financial

concerns. David was able to go to work each day, and returned to the house every evening so they could eat dinner as a family. Erin was placed in a local nursery, which enabled Helen to spend her days on the ward with Asher.

Not only did The Sick Children's Trust alleviate two years of hotel and hospital living costs for the Sinclairs, the family didn't have to split up and were able to remain together to support each other.



“ The Sick Children’s Trust kept us afloat! Whilst Asher was in hospital we still had a mortgage to pay and the stresses of everyday life to navigate. Having free ‘Home from Home’ accommodation close to Asher’s hospital ward meant we could continue to pay the bills. It was such a relief not to be overwhelmed by huge transport, meal and hotel costs in a city as expensive as London.

**Helen Sinclair, Asher’s Mum** ”



I was worried about where we were going stay after I gave birth and I was worried about being in a hospital so far away from home. To be an hour away from him, when you've got to produce milk, express it, take it into NICU for feeds, on top of the stress of going backwards and forwards and missing time with him, is just not feasible. You need to be there all the time, to be there with them. But thanks to The Sick Children's Trust's support, you're focusing on being there for your baby, not on where you can sleep.

**Helen Ledster, Flynn's Mum**

# Improving life-long outcomes

## Giving children the best start in life

As medical care advances, increasing numbers of babies are surviving after being born extremely prematurely or suffering life-threatening neonatal conditions. It is essential that these families are right by their baby's side, day and night, during their first critical weeks and months of life in neonatal intensive care (NICU).

Our 'Homes from Home' support family-centred care, which helps parents and families connect with their baby. This allows families to create essential attachments and bonds within a clinical environment, through things like skin-to-skin or 'kangaroo' care and breastfeeding. Ultimately, this improves a baby's progress and development.

**89%** of families with a baby on neonatal intensive care learned feeding techniques.\*

Studies have shown that providing facilities that enable parents to be involved in their baby's care, including skin-to-skin contact and the opportunity to form early bonds, promotes improved health outcomes in premature babies.\*\*

## Flynn, now aged two, from Hoddesdon, Hertfordshire

Flynn was born prematurely at just 27 weeks at The Rosie Hospital in Cambridge, over an hour away from home.

Flynn was immediately ventilated and admitted to NICU to undergo lifesaving treatment. Born too early and very small, he remained in hospital for six months. During this time, Mum Helen and her husband Dan, alongside older brother Bradley, were supported

with free accommodation run by The Sick Children's Trust. Located just below NICU, Chestnut House enabled them to be together, just minutes from Flynn's bedside. Most importantly, it gave the family the chance to bond with baby Flynn, holding his tiny hand through the

incubator, giving him skin-to-skin cuddles and expressing and feeding him breast milk around the clock. Flynn is now home, but continues to require oxygen treatment, due to his prematurity.

\* At our specialist 'Home from Home', Chestnut House, supporting NICU at the Rosie Hospital.

\*\*Flacking R, Lehtonen L, Thomson G, Axelin A, Ahlqvist S, Hall Moran V, Ewald U, Dykes F. (2012) 'Closeness and separation in neonatal intensive care,' Acta Pædiatrica 101:1032-1037

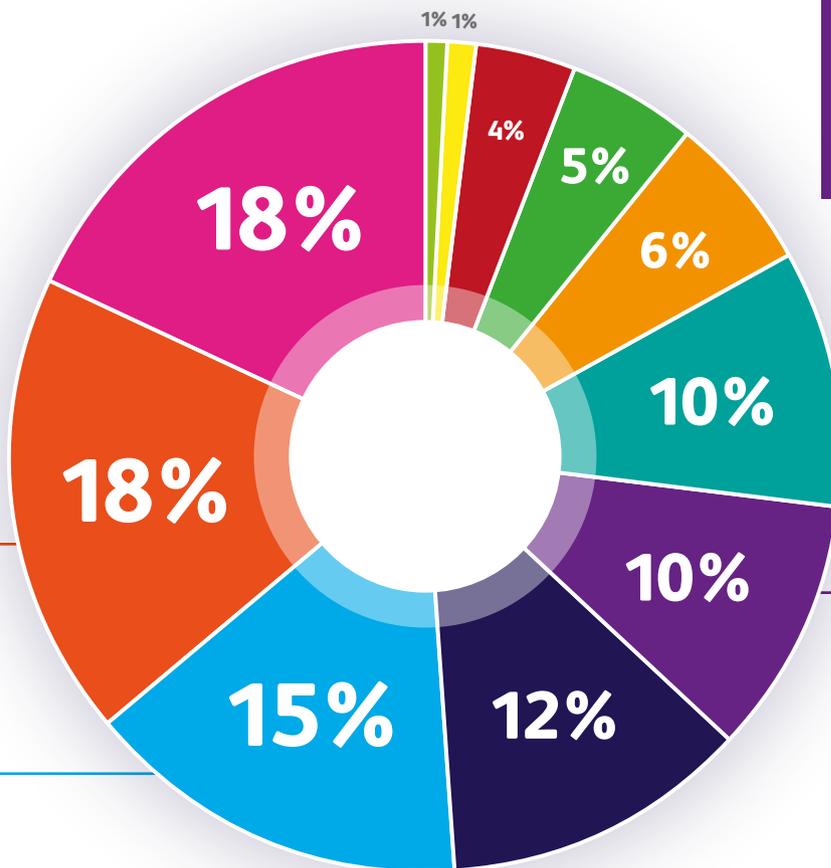
# Income 2017/18

Total £2,479,250

**Events programme –**  
Two gala events fell in the same financial year, with Supper Club and Gin&Fizz, accounting for this increase in fundraising.

**Corporate –**  
A successful 'Charity of The Year' partnership with ArgoGlobal raised £118,000 to date.

**Major gifts –**  
This increase in major gifts was thanks to a very generous one-off donation given to the charity by a key supporter.



● **Supporter events and activities**  
£446,096

● **Events programme**  
£443,961

● **Corporate**  
£363,770

● **Community**  
£311,187

● **Charitable trusts**  
£260,812

● **Major Gifts**  
£241,424

● **Hospitals**  
£148,000

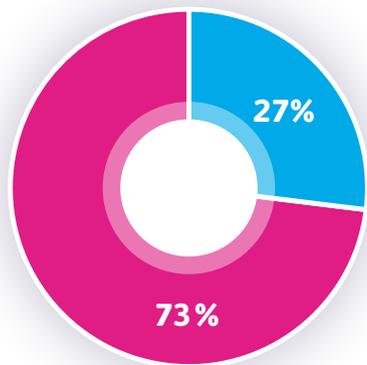
● **Other income**  
£130,194

● **Donations in memoriam**  
£94,590

● **Legacies**  
£29,518

● **Gifts in kind**  
£9,698

# Expenditure 2017/18



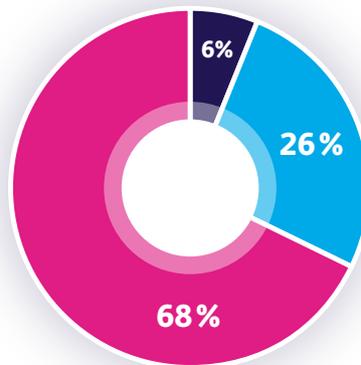
## Expenditure breakdown (without capital costs)

**£2,397,810**

- **Charitable activities**  
**£1,746,103**

This is spent on supporting families in our 'Homes from Home'. It covers the costs of providing free, high-quality accommodation, as well as a dedicated staff team to provide the emotional and practical support families need.

- **Costs of raising funds**  
**£651,707**



## Expenditure breakdown (with capital costs)

**£2,558,149**

- **Charitable activities**  
**£1,746,103**
- **Costs of raising funds**  
**£651,707**
- **Capital costs**  
**£160,339**

In 2017/18, our capital expenditure was the cost of undertaking refurbishments within our existing 'Homes from Home', to maintain their high standards.



**For every £1**  
spent on fundraising,  
**£3.80 was raised**

# Our volunteer partnerships play an important role in supporting families

This year The Sick Children's Trust has received some wonderful support from both new and long-term corporate partners. We would like to give a special mention to our 'Charity of the Year' partners Weil Gotshal & Manges LLP and ArgoGlobal, whilst thanking everybody who has supported us so generously.

Corporate partners have shown commitment outside of traditional fundraising, with employees spending time volunteering at our houses around the UK. From painting to cooking, cleaning to Christmas-decorating, we have been delighted to see the impact they have had on the lives of families staying with us in a 'Home from Home'.

"A service facing experience is just so rare for corporate volunteering. The teams have reported back just how engaging the day was. They can see instantly the impact of the task at hand and the difference it makes."

**Emma Noble, CSR Manager at Utilitywise Plc**

## Providing those little extras to improve a family's experiences

Many of the families who stay in our houses do not have the time to cook meals for themselves, as they spend most of the day at their child's bedside. Therefore, when they return back to the houses, often exhausted and emotionally drained, there is nothing more comforting than finding a home-cooked meal or freshly-baked cake waiting for them.

As well as supporting the day to day running of our houses, our corporate volunteers put on their aprons, picked up their wooden spoons and came up with some delicious creations for families to enjoy.

"My husband Leo and I settled Miriam, our gorgeous nine month old, on her ward on Christmas Eve. Afterwards, we walked back to The Sick Children's Trust's Guilford Street House. When we entered the kitchen we were just overjoyed to see your cake, and even more so when we tasted it and it reminded us of all our Christmases... delicious! You really lifted what could have been a sad moment for us. Thank you so much."

**Katherine Peskett, Miriam's Mum**

In 2017/18 we saw a **70%** increase in number of volunteering days.

Corporate supporters spent **2,222 hours volunteering** for The Sick Children's Trust.

**Employees from 21 different companies** volunteered in our 'Homes from Home'.

If you are interested in becoming a corporate supporter, please email: [fundraising@sickchildrenstrust.org](mailto:fundraising@sickchildrenstrust.org) or call 020 7638 4066.



# Thank you!

We are so very grateful to every one of our supporters, volunteers and staff who have helped us make a difference to the lives of families with seriously ill children over the last year.

35 years ago, two paediatric specialists had a vision of a future where every sick child in hospital would have their family by their side. Today, as a charity which relies entirely on voluntary donations, it's down to our supporters that families at hospitals across the country have a place to stay, and can be there when their child needs them most.

With fundraisers, donors, companies, ambassadors and volunteers, there are so many wonderful supporters to thank, all of whom have inspiring reasons for giving. We appreciate

everyone who has displayed such commitment to providing a 'Home from Home' for families with seriously ill children.

This year we were able to help 3,785 families who had nowhere else to turn when their child was in hospital for lifesaving treatment.

We know that demand for our emotional and practical support is growing, as more children require specialist care at leading children's hospitals. Our vision is that one day every child in hospital will have their family by their side.

Over the next 12 months, there will be many more families in desperate need of our services and we want to ensure they have the sanctuary and respite our 'Homes from Home' provide.

And with your support we know that we can continue to be here, so families can be there for their sick child to support their recovery when it matters most.

**Thank you.**

## **Chief Executive**

Jane Featherstone

## **President**

Michael Crawford CBE

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For more information, please call our team on **020 7638 4066**  
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