



**The Sick
Children's
Trust**

We're here, so families can be together

Spring/Summer 2023

Newsletter

**Anton Du Beke:
our newest
ambassador**

40th Anniversary

Highlights from our
40th anniversary
celebrations

Jacob's Story

"The Sick Children's
Trust rescued us,
we're so thankful"

Welcome

Welcome to our Spring/Summer newsletter. We hope that you enjoy learning about what exciting things have been happening at The Sick Children's Trust and the amazing people who keep our 'Homes from Home' supporting families.

In this edition, two brave families share how we were there for them when they needed it most.

Marie Stockdale tells us about her seven-week stay at Crawford House in Newcastle while baby daughter Eva, one of twins, recovered from major surgery (page 5).

Another remarkable family story (page 8) - Laura Stubbley Down tells us all about how Chestnut House, our 'Home from Home' in Cambridge, twice came to her family's rescue while premature son Jacob was being cared for at The Rosie Hospital.



We also bring you news of what our Super Supporters (page 10) have been up to, as well as looking back on our year-long 40th anniversary celebrations (page 6).

If you feel inspired by what you read and would like to donate, simply scan the QR code on the back page or visit sickchildrenstrust.org/donate. Every donation helps us keep families with a sick child in hospital together. Thanks for reading!

Connect with us on social



[thesickchildrenstrust](https://thesickchildrenstrust.org)



[thesickchildrenstrust](https://thesickchildrenstrust.org)



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Anton Du Beke

Strictly star Anton Du Beke shines a spotlight on The Sick Children's Trust! We are thrilled to announce that Strictly Come Dancing star Anton Du Beke has become an official ambassador to us.



As an ambassador, Anton – who fronted our BBC Lifeline Appeal last year, helping to raise over £30,000 – will be doing everything he can to support us. Speaking about his role, Anton said:

"I am absolutely delighted to officially become an ambassador for The Sick Children's Trust.

"I can't imagine, and I never want to imagine my children not being well, but if I did I would want to be able to stay somewhere near them. The charity offers a solution to families who need to be close to their children at such a critical time by offering welcoming 'Homes from Home'.

"We want to do all we can to raise awareness and offer this valuable service to take pressure off families so they can concentrate on being with their children."

Join Anton on 6 July, when he will be hosting a golf day for us at the stunning Bocket Hall in Hertfordshire. To register, please visit

sickchildrenstrust.org/events/the-anton-du-beke-golf-day/





CALLING ALL DAREDEVILS

Join our skydive weekend and help us support more families

The Sick Children's Trust gives families with a seriously ill child in hospital a warm and comfortable place to stay when they need it most. Help us keep families together by taking on an adrenaline-filled challenge.

Find out more



Charity registration no. 284416

When

3 - 4 June 2023

Where

Durham (4th June only)
Lancaster
North London/Cambridge
Salisbury

Price

To take part you will need to pay a £50 deposit and raise a minimum of £400 sponsorship

For more information:

sickchildrenstrust.org/skydive
fundraising@sickchildrenstrust.org

The Stockdale Family Story

My twin girls, Ava and Mila, were born in May 2022 but my partner, Paul, and I knew things weren't going to be straight forward.



At 20 weeks pregnant I was seen by the foetal medicine department at the Royal Victoria Infirmary (RVI) in Newcastle. While Mila was healthy, Ava was diagnosed with a rare brain condition and an abnormality where her oesophagus was not attached correctly.

Just hours after Ava's birth, she was whisked away for major surgery. It was terrifying. She was in hospital for a total of eight weeks, suffering various complications and setbacks as well as another major surgery.

With the RVI 90 minutes away from our home in Cumbria we were worried about how we would stay by Ava's side. This is where The Sick Children's Trust came to our aid.

Being told we had a room at Crawford House was music to our ears and, for seven weeks, helped to ease our stresses. We were never more than a short walk away from Ava's hospital bedside and we could just focus on her getting better.

Since leaving hospital Ava has been doing well and is starting to do more things for herself. We love seeing her get stronger every day, being with her twin sister. Being at home, together as a family, is just wonderful.

Marie Stockdale, Ava and Mila's mum

Read more about Marie's story

sickchildrenstrust.org/family-stories

40 And Fabulous!

Celebrating four decades of keeping families together. On 23 March 2022, we officially turned 40. Since then we've had a year of celebrations and here are some highlights of a fabulous year.

40 Skydives for 40 years

The daredevils were out in force in August, taking part in our adrenaline-fuelled 40 Skydivers Challenge fundraiser. There were plenty of first-time jumpers, including Aimee Hemstock. Aimee, who in 2016 stayed at our Eckersley House 'Home from Home' in Leeds, decided to fundraise for us in memory of her daughter Lilley, bravely taking on the skydive challenge despite having never set foot in a plane before. Thank you to everyone who took part.



Supporters celebrated at pride-filled 40th Anniversary Awards

Also in September, our 40th Anniversary Awards Evening celebrated the wonderful individuals, families, companies, and organisations that have gone above and beyond to support us. Among the winners were the Bowyer family, who took home the Inspirational Family Award. Dad Ian Bowyer has been fundraising for us since 2009, when we supported his family while daughter Evie needed specialist treatment for a rare genetic condition. All the winners can be found on our website.

Fantastic families feature in BBC Lifeline Appeal

In September, our 'Homes from Home' were the focus of a BBC Lifeline Appeal, a ten-minute programme showcasing what we do. Presented by Strictly star Anton Du Beke and seen on BBC One, BBC Two and BBC iPlayer, the appeal raised over £30,000. It featured three amazing families, the Cross, Pollock, and Mellalieu (pictured) families who all brilliantly explained how we helped them while their children were in hospital.



Ruby Slipper Gala brings curtain down in style

On 23 March 2023 our 40th anniversary celebrations came to a close with the Ruby Slipper Gala supported by CDW. This Wizard of Oz themed event raised an incredible £105,000 to support families. It was attended by our amazing supporters and celebrities and hosted by our ambassador Tim Downie and actress Ronni Ancona. Guests were transported to the Emerald City for an evening of fine wine, food and entertainment. Thank you to everyone who attended.



Jacob's Family Story

My beautiful baby boy Jacob entered the world on 4 July 2022, arriving nearly six weeks early. It had been a difficult pregnancy, with monitoring at our local hospital in Stevenage showing greatly reduced movement, a real concern for me and my wife, Tracey.



Jacob arrived in better condition than expected, weighing 5lbs 8oz. We were overjoyed at becoming first-time parents, but everything changed when Jacob's body temperature began to rise. To our horror, we were told he had possible congenital leukaemia, a rare blood cancer seen in only one in every five million births.

Jacob was immediately blue-lighted to Addenbrooke's Hospital in Cambridge, nearly an hour and a half away from our home in Hertford. As an in-patient myself, recovering from the c-section, it was Tracey who travelled with him.

The following day I arrived at Addenbrooke's as an inpatient, which kept us close to Jacob until I was discharged. With nowhere to stay in Cambridge, panic quickly set in.

Thankfully, we were given a place to stay at Chestnut House, a 'Home from Home' run by The Sick Children's Trust, located directly beneath the ward where Jacob was being treated. It was a huge relief to have this clean, homely, and comfortable place to rest and shower, which allowed us a moment to process everything that had happened.

“ We will always be thankful for Chestnut House being there ”

Jacob took a turn for the worse the following day, being rushed to Great Ormond Street Hospital (GOSH) in London for an emergency operation. Five days later, he returned to Addenbrooke's. With no rooms available at Chestnut House, we spent nine stressful days staying in a different location onsite before The Sick Children's Trust rescued us once again. Going back to Chestnut House felt like heaven. We were so grateful to be back there and could look after ourselves properly while the hospital focussed on helping our boy.



Jacob was finally diagnosed with Transient Abnormal Myelopoiesis (TAM), a rare leukemic bone marrow disorder that usually only appears in newborns with Down's Syndrome. Genetic tests showed that Jacob does not have Down's Syndrome, making him only the 21st reported case of this kind anywhere in the world.

After seven shots of chemotherapy and four blood transfusions, he was finally allowed to come home with us. There is a long road ahead for him and there is always a chance it could return as full-blown leukaemia, but he is so full of life now.

We will always be incredibly thankful for Chestnut House being there for us when we needed it most, keeping us close to Jacob.

Laura Stubley Down, Jacob's mum



Would you like to share your story?

Please visit [sickchildrenstrust.org/share-your-story](https://www.sickchildrenstrust.org/share-your-story)

★ Super Supporters ★

Our wonderful supporters help us to keep thousands of families together every year, just minutes from their child's hospital bedside and we'd like to thank them all.

Here is a glimpse of what our Super Supporters have been up to recently.

Leonardo raised an amazing £866 through a bake sale at his school. He's still counting the donations! Leonardo wanted to thank us for supporting his parents, Lucinda and Ewan, while his younger brother, Oliver, was in hospital.



The Leverton family have supported us since 2009 when their son, Harry, needed treatment in Sheffield. We supported them at Treetop House and they have supported us since through their Leverton Ball which this year raised a fantastic £21,000!

Newcastle Swim Team smashed their challenge to swim 286 miles, the equivalent distance from Scott House in Newcastle to Guilford Street House in London, raising £6,290! Also in Newcastle, the Toon Council's brilliant Snowflake Ball raised an incredible £41,235.



November's Red Diamond Ball, organised by Emma and Simon Robinson, raised a sensational £15,000. Emma and Simon are huge supporters of our charity, raising funds since we supported them at Eckersley House 11 years ago.



Mikaela Cox completed a 100km trek across the Sahara Desert to raise a brilliant £3,275! We supported Mikaela at Stevenson House when son Reggie was born 16 weeks premature, needing treatment at The Royal London Hospital.





Six-year-old Rosena raised over £650 by live streaming her piano recital to friends and family in December. We supported Rosena's family at Chestnut House in Cambridge when Rosena was born three months premature.



Gill Ridley of Ian Ridley Transport was determined to give something back after we supported her at Crawford House in Newcastle, while daughter Jessie received treatment. The result is this incredible HGV trailer which will be seen by road users up and down the country.



Please head to sickchildrenstrust.org/fundraise/run-your-own to register your activity and one of our friendly team will be in touch.



Together at Christmas



Over 300 wonderful supporters were treated to an evening of festive magic in December, as the beautiful St Marylebone Parish Church in central London hosted our Together at Christmas event.



Featuring seasonal carols, entertainment, celebrity readings, stories and more, the evening warmed the hearts and raised a magnificent £15,000 in support of our 'Homes from Home.'



Officially our tenth annual carol service but the first to be held in person since 2019, the event featured a string of performances. Christina Johnston, The Tootsie Rollers, and Classical Reflection all showcased their amazing voices with Christmas-themed songs, while actors Tim Downie and Emilia Fox and TV Presenter Alice Beer entertained with magical readings.

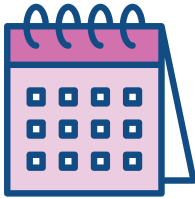
Two songs from the fabulous Toffee Bear Choir from Grimsdell, Mill Hill Pre-Preparatory School brought beaming smiles to onlookers, while an emotional speech from Tom Martin – who stayed with us at Rainbow House while his daughter Annie underwent open heart surgery at Great Ormond Street Hospital – reminded everyone about the vital role we play in supporting families.



Thank you to Reverend Canon Dr Stephen Evans for giving us such a warm welcome on our return to St Marylebone Parish Church. We are already looking forward to doing it all again in December 2023!

Events Calendar

Help raise vital funds for our 'Homes from Home' by taking part in one of our events. To find out how to register for these and more, visit sickchildrenstrust.org/events



Skydive Weekend – 3-4 June

Soar 10,000 feet above the ground, at speeds of up to 120mph in a tandem skydive. Embark on the adventure of a lifetime, while also raising money to help support families with a seriously ill child in hospital.



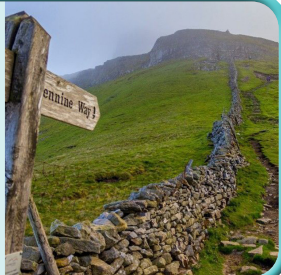
The Anton Du Beke Golf Day – 6 July

The Strictly legend, golfing enthusiast and ambassador for The Sick Children's Trust will be hosting our golf day at the impressive Bocket Hall Estate, Hertfordshire. After 18 holes of golf in this stunning location, you'll end your day with a three-course dinner in the stately home itself.



Yorkshire Three Peaks Challenge – 7-9 July

Fancy climbing the biggest peaks in the Pennines? The Yorkshire Three Peaks Challenge is an unmissable adventure. Sign up today to take on a 24-mile trek across stunning rock formations shaped by glaciers thousands of years ago.



The Great North Run – 10 September

Famous for its amazing atmosphere, the Great North Run is the world's biggest and best half marathon. Join 60,000 determined and dedicated runners on the iconic course and raise vital funds for our 'Homes from Home' in the process.

Clay Pigeon Shoot – 28 September

A brand-new event for 2023, our Clay Pigeon Shoot will give you the chance to really test your aim. As well as the shooting, the day will also feature plenty of food, a live auction, and a high-end raffle. Early bird tickets available until 12 May 2023.



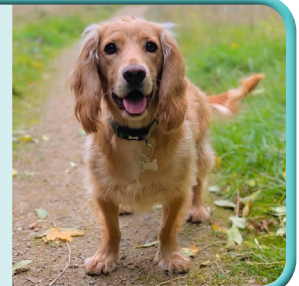
Royal Parks Half Marathon – 8 October

Join #TeamSCT and take on the 13.1 miles through four of London's beautiful Royal Parks; Hyde Park, Kensington Gardens, St James's Park and The Green Park. You will also run past some of the capital's historic landmarks such as Buckingham Palace and the Royal Albert Hall.




Dog Jog Virtual Challenge

Get fit, spend time with family and have fun with your four-legged friend. You can do 5km or any distance you like to raise vital funds for us. Complete your challenge whichever way suits you best – whether that's a brisk walk, a jog or a run. It's your challenge so do it your way!



Register on our website now and we'll send you the fundraising materials you need as well as provide you with support, hints, and tips to ensure your fundraising is as successful as possible. If you need some inspiration, check out our fantastic A-Z of fundraising ideas here:

sickchildrenstrust.org/fundraise/a-z/



**Help
us to continue supporting
families in our 'Homes from Home' by
becoming a Friend of The Sick Children's
Trust. Please scan the QR code below.**

£5 will help to pay for the cleaning of our
'Homes from Home' ensuring a safe
environment for families.



£10 will help us provide pillows, duvets
and sheets so parents can have a
comfortable night sleep.



£15 will go towards paying for our 'Homes
from Home' front line staff, so they can
support families when they need it most.



Any amount that you can give will be
truly appreciated and will go a long way
to supporting us to keep our 'Homes from
Home' open.



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Registered Charity Number: 284416



**The Sick
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