

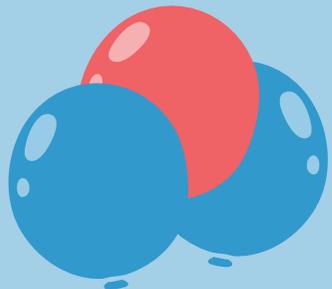


IMPACT REPORT 2023 AND STRATEGIC PLAN 2024

SUPPORTING BEREAVED CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE ACROSS EXETER, EAST AND MID DEVON

We are a small, local charity offering a range of support to children and young people aged 5 – 25 when someone significant in their life dies or is about to die.





Message from our Chair of Trustees

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A MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAIR OF TRUSTEES

Balloons' mission is to support bereaved children and young people across Exeter, East and Mid Devon when someone significant in their lives dies, and to work alongside their families and the professionals who care for them to further enhance the support they receive.

Over this last year our team of staff and volunteers have done a fantastic job doing just that.

This Impact Report celebrates our achievements against our strategic priorities and looks forward to the year ahead. We do hope you enjoy reading it and agree that despite being small, we have made a big difference to our local community.

Steve Bright



OUR PRIORITIES

The following are the strategic priorities agreed by the board for the coming 3 years. Each year an operational plan is developed with targets for the coming year against each of the three priority areas.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

To support bereaved children, young people (CYP) and families and improve their outcomes

To generate income to sustain and develop our services

To grow our people (staff, volunteers and trustee board)

HOW WE'LL ACHIEVE THEM

Delivering direct and indirect support to CYP and their families pre and post bereavement

Diversifying income streams in the short, medium and long term, developing and delivering on an annual fundraising strategy

Supporting and investing in our people

To develop our infrastructure and systems to enable us to deliver on the strategic priorities



2023 IN NUMBERS

PRIORITY 1 SUPPORTING BEREAVED CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Responded to

487

calls from families,
schools and other
professionals

Enabled

33

local individuals to
volunteer as Grief
Support Workers, giving
their time to support
bereaved children and
young people

Delivered support
in over

60

local schools and
colleges

Supported

133

children and young
people by delivering

524

one-to-one grief support
sessions

Trained

100

professionals in
bereavement
support

Sent out

217

care packages to
bereaved children
and young
people

6

Activity Days attended by

114

children, parents and
carers

PRIORITY 1 SUPPORTING BEREAVED CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE



THE DIFFERENCE WE HAVE MADE

Through our work we have been able to make a difference to the children and young people we come in contact with. But don't take it from us – here are some stories and feedback from the year from children, families and schools themselves.

FINN AND LIV'S STORY

In November, Children in Need came to talk to Liv and Finn. They are two young people who we supported after their beloved Nan died. BBC Spotlight featured the film about their experience and the difference that Balloons made to them. This was shown as part of Children in Need coverage on the BBC. We were so grateful to them for sharing their story and raising awareness of Balloons and how we can help bereaved children and young people.



You can play the film by clicking on it above or going to <https://www.balloonscharity.co.uk/spotlight-on-balloons-for-bbc-children-in-need/>

2023 IN QUOTES - OUR SERVICE USERS

'I found Balloons extremely helpful and enjoyed meeting my key worker S. I enjoyed talking about my nan with someone out of the family unit. It made me feel less anxious and it helped me to understand my feelings.'

Young person

'It's provided a safe space for him to talk and process his feelings.'

School

'F's behavior has improved at school and he is less angry and anxious at home. He can talk openly about his Nan when he needs. He particularly likes cuddling up to the blanket from Balloons that has his Nan's perfume on.'

Parent

'Y has very much enjoyed his time with X, he's always come back from school (on days where he's had a session) that little bit more happy and positive which makes all the difference at the moment. Thank you to X and the team for your outstanding work.'

Parent

'Balloons has greatly impacted my child's confidence, ability to process the grief and made her look at what she can do when she gets angry and sad about the situation and others. She really has grown, the staff at school have also commented on this. I can't thank Balloons enough for giving her this opportunity to express her feelings in a safe space with what she describes as a wonderful lady.'

Parent

'I really loved working with V. She was kind and good to talk to.....I felt more confident after speaking to V and looked forward to Fridays when she would come in to see me. I do feel better after having Balloons visit me.'

Child

'Can I please ask you to pass on our personal thanks to your wonderful staff who have supported some pupils through some difficult times this past year. I can't even begin to tell you how 'life changing' your input is to our little people. We can't change the tragic events which some have to go through, but YOU DO change how they come out the other side.'

School

THE YEAR AHEAD...

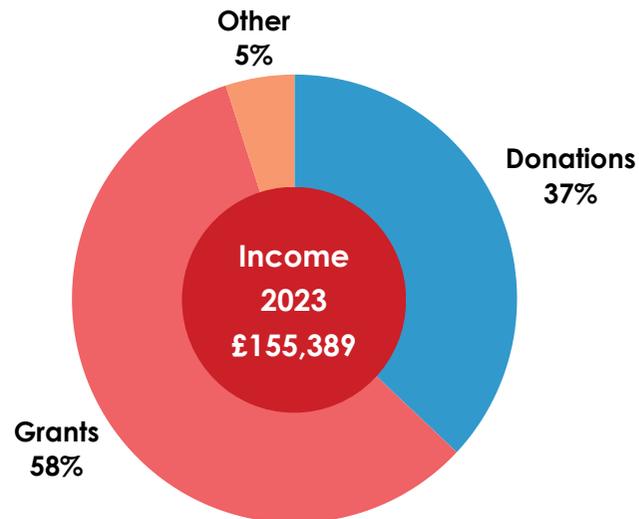
For the coming year we will be continuing this work as well as piloting some group work. This is in response to feedback about children and young people wanting to make more connections with others. It will also enable us to offer another service at times when our waiting list is closed due to high demand for our support.

2023 ACCOUNTS SUMMARY

Generating income to cover our costs is critical to keep Balloons running so that we can support more children and young people. The majority of our funds come from applying for grants, followed by fundraising and donations. Our full year accounts are available on our website

balloonscharity.co.uk/about-us

It has been a challenging year for fundraising across both grants and the community, and we are extremely grateful for all those who have raised funds and supported us with grants, and a huge thank you as well to those individuals who give generously to our cause.



A key part of this priority is spreading the word about our support. This year we have had some amazing opportunities and developments:

- Featuring on BBC Children in Need as part of their TV and radio coverage
- Meeting the Duchess of Edinburgh as part of an event in Tiverton
- Being part of the Archbishop of Canterbury's bereavement event at Exeter University
- Launching our new website
- Growing our reach through our social networks
- Attending community and corporate events to talk about and showcase our work



**The cost to run Balloons
in 2023**

PRIORITY 2

SUSTAINING

AND

DEVELOPING

OUR SERVICES





2023 THANK YOU!

We are extremely grateful to all the organisations, clubs and societies (listed below) that have raised funds or supported us 'in kind' this last year. A huge thank you also to those many individuals who give generously to our cause. Without your support, we would not have been there to provide much-needed support to children and young people.

The Big Lottery
Alarmtec Ltd
Alert Drivers School of Motoring
Alphington Primary School
Aquila
Armada Asset Finance
Beacon Lodge
Blundells Preparatory School
Bradninch Music Festival
Bradninch WI
Brixington FISH
Broadclyst Victory Hall
Buckerell Community Association
Budleigh Salterton Cricket Club
Children in Need
CIHT South West
Clyst Vale Community College
Comic Relief
Cranbrook Running Club
Crediton Trefoil Guild
Devon Community Foundation

Devon Dynamites Majorettes
Diamond Twirlers Majorettes
Double Elephant Print Workshop
Dynamix Choir
East Devon Crematorium
Exeter & Devon Crematorium
Exeter Chiefs Foundation
Exeter City Football Club
Exeter Healers Centre
Exeter Northcott Theatre
Exeter Quilters
Exmouth Bridge Club
Farringdon House Trust
Fifi and Bear
Foxgloves
Hobbycraft
Honiton Tai Chi
Ikea
Leapfrogs Nursery
Littletown Primary School
Love to Make

McWhirter
Monica Rabagliati Trust
National Highways
Otter Garden Centres
Pebblebed Pottery
Pertemps
Pinhoe Jubilee Club
Pinhoe Pantomime Society
Plus Alpha Translations
Practice Plus Group
Primark
Princess Theatre
Puffins Nursery
RAMM Museum
Red One Limited
SDS
Seaton PCC
Ship and Pelican Pub
Sidmouth Lions Club
Simple Media
Sir Walter Raleigh Pub

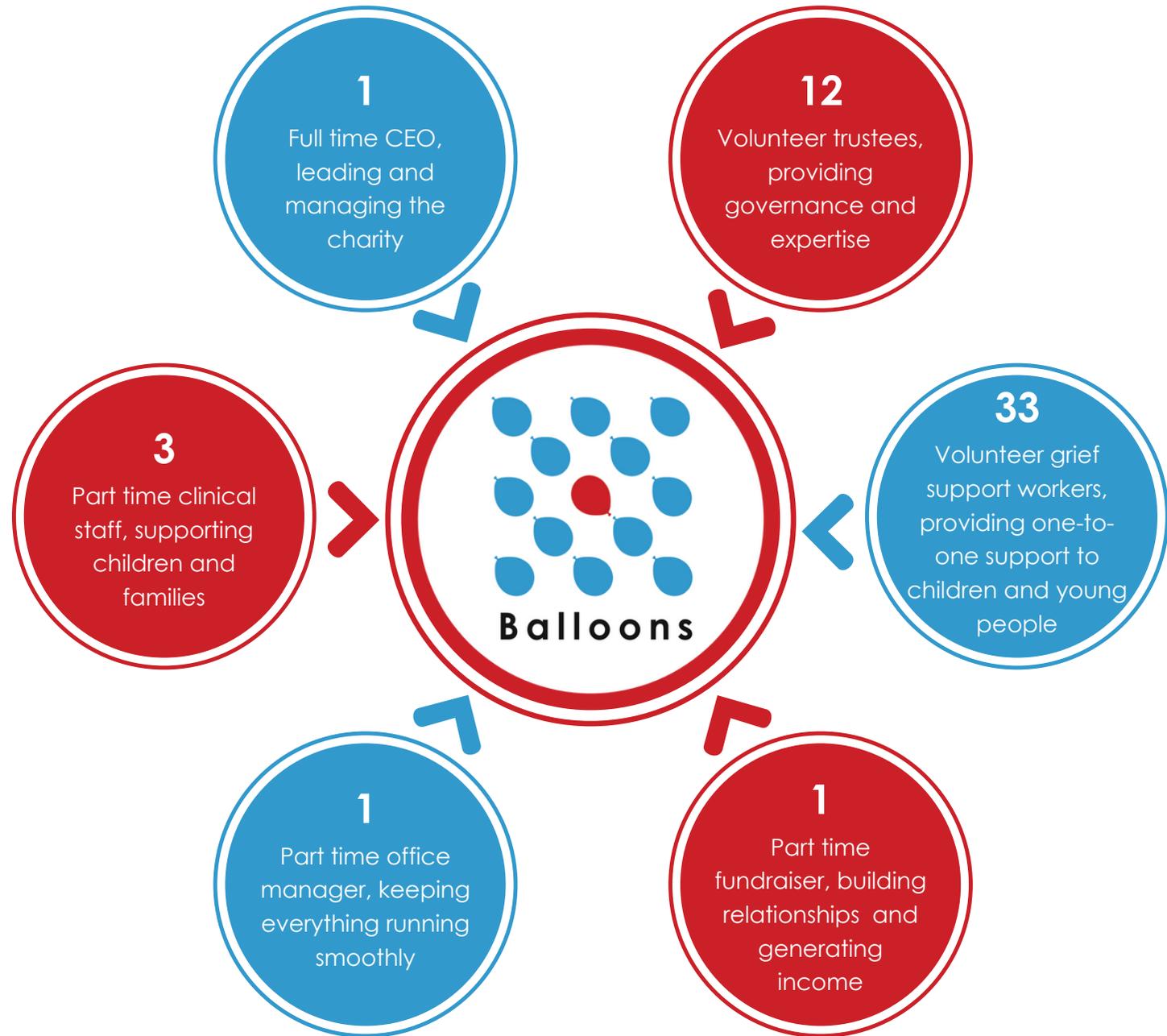
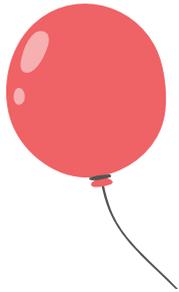
St James' Place
Starcross Primary School
Stephens Scown
Tally Ho! Pub
Tender Victory Ltd
Tesco
The Albert Hunt Trust
The Exeter School
The Freemasons
The Gibbons Trust
The King's School
The Maynard School
The Moorlands Club
The Norman Family Trust
The Works
Trinity Primary School
Tuesday Fellowship Group
Whitehead Building Services
Wilton Bradley
WSP
Wynstream Primary School

THE YEAR AHEAD...

Our fundraising challenge for 2024 is **big** and if you feel able to help us in anyway, we would love to hear from you!

PRIORITY 3 OUR PEOPLE

Our people are what makes all of our work possible. Over the last year, all of these people have been involved in enabling Balloons to do its work.



2023 IN QUOTES - OUR VOLUNTEERS AND TRUSTEES

"Everyone works as a team, which means there is support available at all times, this is very reassuring and makes me feel valued."

Grief Support Worker

"The support and supervision is excellent and so well managed. I have definitely benefitted from the advice and care given to me. I feel I have developed in my role as a grief support worker, and this is down to support given to me. I am very grateful!"

Grief Support Worker

"My greatest joy is when I sit by each child in the last session looking back at everything we've done together! I consider my time volunteering for Balloons is the most worthwhile part of my week!"

Grief Support Worker

"It is a wonderful charity. I have gained so much enjoyment and knowledge from being a Trustee."

Balloons Trustee

"I wish I could magic up some more Grief Support Workers for Balloons. You remain a wonderful organisation to volunteer for, full of kind, empathetic and highly skilled people who all care very deeply about the young people and families they look after as well as providing much support to your volunteers, showing us respect, helpfulness, and consideration. We are made to feel very valued for the work we do.

Thank you."

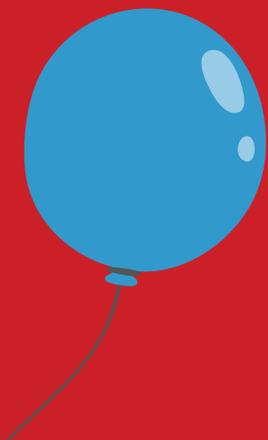
Grief Support Worker

"It's a privilege to be a trustee for such a wonderful and important charity."

Balloons Trustee

THE YEAR AHEAD...

Our priority in this area is to keep looking after our staff and volunteer team, supporting them so that they can support children and families in the best way possible. We will also be aiming to recruit and train more Grief Support Workers, as well as recruiting for the Chair of our trustee board who will be retiring in the summer.



CONTACT US

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Thank you for your interest in Balloons and for reading our report. If you would like to join us in making an even bigger impact in supporting bereaved children, young people and their families in our area, we would love to hear from you!

Balloons (Devon) - Registered Charity No. 1158666