

In 2014 Gripple once again entered the Master Cutler's Challenge where companies from across Sheffield compete to raise as much money as possible over a six month period for their nominated charities.

The two main charities that benefitted were the Jessop Wing, which is a neonatal intensive care maternity unit, and Whirlow Hall Farm Trust, a working farm which provides visits to local schools and groups with disadvantages or special needs. A host of other local smaller charities were also supported by the Challenge.

Twenty people from Gripple, including Hugh and Frances, attended the Awards ceremony in Whirlow's lambing barn and were thrilled to be awarded the highly prestigious Master Cutler's Award! Well done to everyone who took part and, although we can't mention every event, here are just a few highlights:-



Lunches from around the world

Ewa & Kinga over many months took us on a wonderful international culinary tour, preparing delicious lunches, which were served at OWGW. On one occasion, after finishing their late shift at Gripple, the girls were preparing and cooking until 2.00 am!

Baby Hats

Inspired by the challenge, Josie and two of her elderly relatives spent months, knitting literally hundreds of baby hats for the grateful staff and parents on Jessop's premature baby unit – with a special request from the hospital to knit tiny hats that would fit little heads the size of tennis balls.

Yorkshire 3 Peak Challenge

Ewa Lakoma & Jarek, Weronika & Sam, Alex (Packing) and Andy Gull completed this amazing feat/feet?! of endurance on a very hot day indeed but all made it to tell the tale, although with quite a few blisters around at the end of the long day!



Spookily True Mystic Readings

With a wave of her magic wand, Claire transformed herself into the amazing Claire Voyant and, using her Oracle cards, delivered some uncannily true messages!



Wearing the Colours in Shame & Ice-bucket Challenge

Paul Pleasance and Nathan became a winning duo, with our ardent Scottish Nathan biting the bullet for a good cause and wearing the England strip. Not sure he'll ever live this one down! Nathan also bravely subjected himself to the ultimate ice-bucket challenge ... brrrrr!



Car Wash

Sam, Ben, Rory and Gavin set up their very own car wash and our scruffy cars were transformed into gleaming showroom items!



Im a Manager Get Me Out of Here!!

Fantastic idea organised by Josie and Tracey. They challenged some very brave senior members of staff to eat their way through a variety of stomach churning items, including dried insects, custard and cockle surprise and tripe.



80's Sweet Shop

Donna went retro, whisking us back a few decades to the 80's and selling some wonderful sweets and goodies from yesteryear.... yum!

Raffles

Gill and Shaz assembled a wonderful array of prizes from our suppliers and organised 2 raffles, plus the brilliant Name the Baby competition!

Food Glorious Food

Throughout the challenge, we were all treated to delicious cupcakes, gateaux, breakfasts and crumpet mornings, Wimbledon strawberries and ice-cream, at both OWGW and RSW, with thanks to all those many, many people who participated, with Pat leading the way.



People Power

Mickley Hall Garden Renovation – Leonard Cheshire Care & Disability Home

Around 40 people from Gripple volunteered to tidy and renovate the garden area which surrounds the care home. The activity was kicked off by the board of directors, who tidied the garden as part of their own team building activity. This was followed by a week of work which included power cleaning the patio at the back of the home, planting bulbs in the front gardens and adding flower beds in the back gardens. The result was a bright, refreshed garden for all the residents to enjoy.



Dr Ted's Appeal

The Gripple hanger team made Dr Ted's Children Hospital in Rotherham its chosen charity this year and completed a variety of events such as homemade cake sales, a pool tournament, football cards and pink collar boxing. Dr Ted's is a charity which aims to enhance the quality of life for all children at Rotherham Hospital. This charity is close to Martin Hartley's heart as his son will soon need an operation at the hospital. We were delighted that Dr Ted's was also chosen to benefit from our Christmas party raffle.



Dragonboat Race Day – in aid of SRSB

We entered another motley crew of dragon boat racers in September at the annual event at Rother Valley Country Park. The team were delighted to raise money for Sheffield Royal Society for the Blind, with the charities committee also making a separate donation towards the 'Little Sparklers' Christmas party at the end of 2014. While the Grip 'n' Pull Pirates didn't qualify for the latter stages of the event, the team performed admirably in all three heats and thoroughly enjoyed the day.



Ethel Barge Trust – Charities team building day

The charities team embarked on its first ever team-building day in July with a trip to Staniland Marina in Thorn to spend the day on the Ethel Trust Community Barge – a registered charity providing boating trips to community groups. The team spent the morning painting and varnishing Ethel and even managed to get a spot on a local radio station to talk about the project.



Automation Community Project – Stannington Scouts

Led by scout leader and design engineer Lee Ford, the Automation team set to work on a week-long project in August to tidy the area surrounding the Stannington Scout Hut and create a more usable space for the 200 children using the facility every week. The team were able to clear an untidy space rife with nettles, secure the space with Gripple fencing and install fire pits in a new, recreational area for the Scouts to enjoy.



Link Community Project – Engineering team community project

Inspired by Kirk, Gripple's Engineering team completed a week-long initiative to renovate a community space in the Stradbroke area of Sheffield. The Link Community is a second-hand shop and local hub which uses its earnings to provide free and subsidised courses for local people. During the team's short time there, they were able to install new skirting boards, sliding doors, colour-changing lights and sink units. They also repaired holes in the walls and replaced laminate flooring. The result is a rejuvenated and modern room which The Link say has become a real hotspot for community activity. Well done team!



SRSB Tesco Shopping Trip

We were delighted to volunteer our services to the SRSB again in November with assisted shopping trips to Tesco with some of the society's members. Over 20 volunteers went along to help visually impaired ladies and gentlemen with their shopping – a seemingly everyday task which really does mean a lot to the charity and its members.

It's a Knockout – Bluebell Wood

We entered a team of 8 who took part in wacky activities such as racing across a bouncy castle covered with soap suds and pretending to be chickens while transporting eggs between their legs! The team had a brilliant time participating and managed to finish in a fantastic 4th place out of 24 entered teams. Well done!

Here are just a few of the many charities we have supported financially in 2014 thanks to Gripple's generosity

Circus Starr

Circus Starr is a touring circus boasting world-class, professional artists from across the globe. It was founded in 1987 to help raise funds for local charities whilst providing free seats for thousands of disadvantaged, disabled or vulnerable children. Our donation enabled 9 children to see the circus show at Don Valley Stadium.

St Vincents Furniture Store

Located on Queens Road and established 1987, this charity collects and recycles furniture and household goods free of charge to local disadvantaged families and individuals rebuilding their lives.

CRUSE Bereavement Care

Although receiving increasingly more referrals from GPs, they rely totally on charitable donations. This organisation operates with one paid administrator in Sheffield and 30 volunteers. Last year they took over 1,200 phone calls and saw 318 people for one to one or group support.

St Wilfrid's Centre

An unassuming building on Queen's Road, with fantastic work going on inside. The centre provides a caring environment where homeless and vulnerable people can find understanding, practical assistance, a sense of belonging and support to regain their self esteem. In providing welfare and educational opportunities they hope to help people overcome barriers of social exclusion and provide them with the opportunity to improve their quality of life.



The centre provides various development activities, including looking after the allotment, pottery and cooking.

Sheffield Partnership Rivers in Town Environments (SPRITE)

This local not for profit group, looks after the rivers of Sheffield, primarily the Rivers Sheaf, Don and Loxley, and their associated wildlife. We've purchased two Riverfly Partnership Monitoring Kits and Kate Q tried out her new waders to complete the exercise.

Sheffield Parent Carer Forum

Sheffield Parent and Carer Forum is an independent group of parents and carers of children and young people with disabilities and special educational needs. Their aim is to ensure that the needs of the children are met and offer support. Our donation this year went towards organising a private screening last Christmas of Arthur Christmas at The Showroom, including chocolate treats for the children.

Bridlington Lifeboat Station

Every year we like to support a local lifeboat station as many of us spend our holidays on the east coast.

Royal British Legion

The Royal British Legion helps the whole armed forces community through welfare, comradeship and representation as well as being the Nation's custodian of Remembrance. They help members of the Royal Navy, British Army and Royal Air Force, Reservists, Veterans and their families. They campaign to improve their lives, organise the poppy appeal and remember the fallen.



Chris Bell invited an ex serviceman to visit Gripple in the centenary year of the start of the 1st World War.

St Luke's Hospice

St Luke's are making fantastic progress and have now opened their new state of the art In-patient centre, which patients were able to move into last November. They now need to raise the last £750k (of their initial £5m) to complete the project, which we were pleased to support.

Sheffield Steelers Wheelchair Basketball Club

This was founded in 1987 by a handful of ex-patients from the Spinal Injuries Unit at Lodgemoor, a division of the NHS Sheffield Teaching Hospital Trust. They recruit players of all abilities, from amateur through to world class, from across the country. The club trains at their multi-sport training venue in the Spinal Injuries Unit at Northern General Hospital.

Sheffield Children's Hospital

We showed our continued support to this fantastic cause by taking part in the Easter Egg appeal, and sponsoring a snowflake.

ACCT (Aspergers Children and Carers Together)

Asperger's Children and Carers Together (ACCT) is a parent-led support group for children and families affected by Asperger's syndrome and High Functioning Autism. Our donation helped pay for a family day out to Cannon Hall Farm as many parents are unable to access a day out due to the financial cost and their child's unpredictable behaviour.

Yorkshire Air Ambulance

The Yorkshire Air Ambulance Charity relies on the generosity of individuals and organisations to help save lives across Yorkshire. This year we have continued with our support to this excellent local charity.



Here's a few who chose to go that extra mile...some quite literally!

National Three Peaks Challenge

Michael Hodgson, along with 6 friends, completed the National 3 Peaks Challenge in May, in aid of the Donal Parsons Trust – a charity set up to support the treatment of a 7 year old boy suffering from Neuroblastoma, a rare form of children's cancer.



Marketing Team Cycle Challenge

As part of the Marketing Team's support of the Mental Health Foundation during October, the team borrowed an exercise bike from a local gym and pledged to cycle the equivalent distance from the Old West Gun Works, to Gripple Europe in Obernai – over a 1000 km in total. With the team doing hour-long shifts on the bike and with help from fellow Gripple colleagues it was a terrific display of endurance from all involved.



Neil's Cracking Idea

Neil Clarke took on a special type of challenge to show his support for the Jessop Wing Maternity Unit, declaring his intention to get the Gripple logo permanently tattooed on his backside if he reached his fundraising target. Naturally, many people rallied round to ensure this spectacle wasn't missed and Neil reached his goal. And what can we say about the resulting tattoo? Well, it's cracking.....!

Tom's 150 Mile Bike Ride

Tom Roebuck took part in a 150 mile bike ride in aid of Weston Park Hospital Cancer Charity, after a teammate from Tom's local football club lost his mum to cancer. A 3 day endurance challenge, Tom cycled to Hull on the first day, York on the second, before returning to Sheffield on the final day. Great effort Tom!

Taking to the Sky

In July, Ewa, Karolina, James, Tom and Joe bravely leapt from an aircraft at 13,000 ft, in a tandem skydive to raise money for Support Dogs. The funds will be used to train specialist assistance dogs to improve independence and quality of life for people with various medical conditions such as epilepsy and autism.



Kirk's Head-shave

A man with plenty of experience in unique barnets, Kirk decided to sacrifice his luscious locks in August, in aid of Macmillan Cancer Support. Shaving all his hair off and leaving his caveman beard intact, in his own words, Kirk had an "upside down face" during the initial weeks that followed.



Here is the full list of charities supported by the Gripple Charities Team in 2014

ACCT
Automation's Community Project
Bader Braves
Belong
Bluebell Wood Children's Hospice
Bolsterstone Male Voice Choir
Brain Tumour Research & Support
BRAKE
Breast Cancer Campaign
Bridlington Lifeboat Station
Cancer Research UK
Childrens Hospital Charity
Circus Starr
Croatian Red Cross
CRUSE Bereavement Care
Dandelion Trust
Dementia UK
Dr Ted's Children's Appeal
Edale Mountain Rescue
Ethel Trust Community Barge
Firshill Craft Group
First Class Fundraising, Lillie's Wish to Walk
Frecheville Creative Modelling Club
Gilbert Court Social Club
Help for Heroes

Hillview Church, Gloucester
Kendal Middleton Jessop Appeal
Kick-4-Life
Lennox Childrens Cancer Fund
Link Community Project
Macmillan Cancer Support
Marie Curie
Master Cutler's Challenge
Maytree - a Sanctuary for the Suicidal
Mental Health Foundation
Neuroblastoma, (Donal Parson's Trust)
New Testament Church of God
Operation Christmas Child
Parkside Nursing Home, Mansfield
Riley France, PACES
Rotherham Cancer Care Centre
Rotherham Hospital Dr Ted's Children's Appeal
Royal British Legion
Safe @ Last
Save the Children
Sheffield Children's Hospital Easter Egg Appeal
Sheffield ME Group
Sheffield Mencap and Gateway
Sheffield Parent Carer Forum

Sheffield Sabres U14 Ice Hockey Team
Sheffield Sea Cadets
Sheffield Sports Commentaries
Sheffield Steelers Wheelchair Basketball Club
SHINE
Shophmobility Sheffield
Southern Light Community Church
Sport Relief
SPRITE
Sheffield Royal Society for the Blind
St John Ambulance South & West Yorkshire
St John's Hospice, Balby
St Luke's Hospice
St Vincent's Furniture Store
St Wilfrid's Centre
Thornbury Animal Sanctuary
Tree of Hope
Variety in Yorkshire
Whirlow Hall Farm Trust
Willow Foundation
Woodthorpe Community Primary School
Yorkshire Air Ambulance