



Towergate gives backing to Charities Day growth



• Towergate's Peter Cullum (left) signs the £15,000 cheque while the Insurance Charities president Ken Davidson looks on.

Towergate Partnership has made a donation of £15,000 to The Insurance Charities to back the renewed focus on Insurance Charities Day, which this year moves to late June for the first time.

Peter Cullum, Towergate's Executive Chairman presented the cheque to Ken Davidson, President of the Insurance Charities in the boardroom of Towergate's Leadenhall Street office.

Towergate's cheque was made to match the donations for Insurance Charities Day which was held last March. This event included the Charities Walk in the City of London which was completed by Andy Homer, Group Chief Executive of Towergate.

Peter Cullum said: "A company is not just about great business performance, it's also about having a heart and soul. We're therefore delighted to make this donation to the Insurance Charities which does such a wonderful job supporting past and present employees of the insurance industry. This donation comes at time when

we have just launched the Towergate Charitable Foundation which will work with a range of charities we now support."

Ken Davidson said: "We thank Towergate most sincerely for its generous financial support and its commitment to work with us in the future. We are proud of the financial and practical help we have been able to give to so many insurance people in need over the past 100 years. Moving forward, however, we need to ensure that employers are actively engaged with us if we are to be able to reach out to all those in need of help. We look forward to working with Towergate and other employers to ensure that no one in need misses out."

The extra support from Towergate certainly had the desired effect last year as the amounts raised by local institutes and others on Insurance Charities Day rose for the first time in many years, lifting the final total – with Towergate's donation – to well over £30,000.

Luton and St Albans sets new standards in local publicity

Is this the best kept secret in our profession? That was the stark question that Charities Representative Paul Swanton posed at the top of an article in the Luton & St Albans institute newsletter.

The secret he was referring to was The Insurance Charities and he went on to answer his question by setting out what the Charities does and, crucially, what local institute members can do for the Charities. He outlined three key steps to spread the word:

1. Look out for current or former colleagues who might have fallen on hard times for whatever reason. The Charities might be able to help them.
2. Make all HR departments aware of the existence of the Charities and the huge range of support they can offer.
3. Raise funds – the Charities needs money.

CHARITY BEGINS AT THE OFFICE

IS THIS THE BEST KEPT SECRET IN OUR PROFESSION? EVERYBODY LOOKS UPON INSURANCE AS 'A GOLD MINE, DEFENSIBLE JOB WITH A PENSION'. SURELY, NO ONE IN INSURANCE CAN SUFFER HARD TIMES DUE TO UNUSUAL OR FINANCIAL INSECURITY? THINK AGAIN...

I suggest that few of you – certainly outside the Institute Council – will be aware of the fantastic work undertaken by the Insurance Charities in assisting with vital financial and practical support to colleagues past and present.

Anyone who has spent at least five years (or less) working as an insurance official or within an insurance company or financially, regardless of their type of work, and has fallen on hard times is eligible, as are their dependent children. The work (and even the existence) of the Insurance Charities however does seem to be a big secret within the local insurance community.

It is just the older, retired and infirm members of our profession that can benefit (either). The Charity stepped up to help as soon as they were made aware of our young widow, hit close in her late twenties to raise two young children when her husband (who was not in the profession) died suddenly and unannounced several years ago.

The Charity would not have known about her circumstances, had they not been alerted by her former employer – himself a former local Institute President.

Did you know that within the geographical boundaries of our Institute, an area that stretches from Leighton Buzzard to Bishop Cleeve and from just north of Bedford, right into North London, the Charity is currently assisting 3 active cases? That is not because only a very few people have fallen on hard times. It is because national experience suggests that we don't always know about people that need help. And very often, those who most need assistance don't know where or how to apply to receive it.

Other local institutes in our vicinity are in a similar position.

I'm appealing to all members of our Institute to take a few minutes from their busy day and consider these three steps to increased awareness:

1. Do you know of anyone who works or has worked in the profession, past or present, who might benefit from the help available from the Insurance Charities? If so, please alert that person to the assistance the Charity might be able to offer. Contact details are below.
2. Could ALL of you please email details of the Charity to your HR departments, salary and pension departments, and to anyone else within your organisation who might be aware of current and ex-employees and pensioners who could derive some benefit and assistance from the charity? Often it is these departments who will be aware of personal situations and maybe able to pass on details to the benefit of your work colleagues.
3. Please ensure that these departments are fully aware of the charity. And, please, don't assume that someone else will do it.

4. Raising funds. With so many charities and good causes, unless your financial help is done seen that we are always being asked to dip into our pockets. The difference with the insurance charities is that you, your family or one of your colleagues and their families that may actually benefit from the assistance available.

Please try and help us to help the insurance charities by holding at least one event per year within our region/institute in addition to the Annual Insurance Charities Day. (Which will be held in June 2008). Whether it is a coffee, a quiz or a dress-down day playing collection boxes in the office, in fact any thing you can think of: this has a dual purpose – not only will you be raising FUNDS, but you will raise AWARENESS of the help available. Remember to say you are from the Luton & St Albans Institute when donating.

Please contact the Charities via the website theinsurancecharities.org.uk or telephone them on 020 7606 3763.

Thank you
Paul Swanton
Charities Representative

• Breaking the 'best kept secret' in style.

**Contacting
The Insurance Charities**

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Fax: 020 7600 1170

info@theinsurancecharities.org.uk

Case Study: Simon

Simon has worked in the insurance industry since leaving school. His wife also had taken up a career in insurance after leaving school in the 1980s. She left in 1999 to look after the couple's two children.

In 2001, Simon's wife was diagnosed with cervical cancer. Treatment and surgery followed and it seemed as if all was well. Last year, however, the cancer returned and the family was given the sad news that there was nothing further which could be done. Simon's wife died in the autumn.

The Insurance Charities has been able to give both continuing help to the family, to help supplement Simon's income, as well as support with items which have enabled the family to start to come to terms with their loss. We cannot, in any way, replace a wife or a mother but we have eased the burden for the family so that their reduced income is not a concern.

In a recent letter, Simon confirmed how much our support meant to him and his young family:

"Your organisation has made, and will continue to make, a big difference to us and words fail me as to how to describe how grateful and humbled I am by your generosity. After the last 12 dreadful months I had begun to forget that life can be good but you have shown there to be a flicker of light at the end of the tunnel."

Golf tournament boosts two local institute centenary celebrations

Two local insurance institutes are giving their centenary celebrations a boost by hosting the national final of the Insurance Charities golf tournament.

This September, Northampton will be the venue as golfers from around the country battle it out for the Julius Neave Trophy. In 2009, Stoke looks forward to hosting the final.

The tournament is open to winners of local institute golf days and those hosted by any firm in the insurance market. There is scope for linking more local tournaments to this national event which has raised £4000 annually over the last few years.

Charities Walk 2008 will build on first year success

Plans are already in hand to build on the success of the Insurance Charities Walk initiative last year with the move of Insurance Charities Day in the United Kingdom to the third Friday in June – this year it will be on Friday 20 June.

There will be another lunchtime walk in London that day and we are looking to link up with more insurance offices in the City.

There will be a circular route so that people can join at various locations and complete the mile or so route, finishing back at their starting point.

The purpose of the walk is to give the Insurance Charities more profile among City based firms and to raise money, either through individual or corporate sponsorship. Full details of the route will be available soon from the office or via the Charities website.

Around the country, local institutes will be planning similar events for the Friday, or more family orientated events over the weekend. The Marketing & Fundraising Committee also hopes that the summer date for Insurance Charities Day will be the prompt for many firms and local institutes to have a fresh look at what they do to support the Charities.



• Tunbridge Wells institute members enjoy a stroll in the park on the 2007 Charities Walk

Ireland stays with March for Charities promotion

The Irish insurance market decided to stick with the first Friday in March for its Insurance Charities Day promotion, which centres around its popular and well-supported annual lunch in Dublin.

The president of the Charities, Ken Davidson joined 380 guests at this year's Dublin lunch which has so far raised €24,300.

"I am thrilled by the support the Charities gets from Ireland and deeply grateful on behalf of everybody the Charities helps for the very generous support you give. You set an example that we need other insurance markets to aspire to", said Mr Davidson.



• 2007 winner Malcolm Handyside (right) receives the trophy from Charities trustee Keith Lugton