



# Fundraising Principles and the Wishing Well Appeal

*Martyn Lewis interviews Marion Allford about the principles of fundraising and what they meant for the success of the Wishing Well Appeal*

Marion Allford was Director of the Wishing Well Appeal which raised £54 million to rebuild a substantial part of the Hospital for Sick Children, Great Ormond Street. She is now Managing Director of Business in the Community's fund-raising advisory unit. Business in the Community is a charity which aims to make community involvement an accepted part of successful business practice, and to increase the quality and extent of business activity in the community.

**Q** "Could I start by asking you about the things which stick in your mind most about the Wishing Well Appeal?"

"It's difficult to choose from amongst the enormous range of heartening, exciting, imaginative and moving moments which The Wishing Well Appeal team shared. At one extreme was our surprise and delight at receiving, through the post, 5p sent by a five-year-old to: "Great Ormond love Sarah". At the other was the letter I opened, sitting at my desk one day, when to my astonishment, I saw that the nice letter of response enclosed a cheque for £3,000,000... with no strings attached! And it wasn't even April the 1st!"

**Q** "Can every appeal produce the sort of response generated by Great Ormond Street?"

"Sadly, no. Nevertheless, certain principles are an essential prerequisite for success, whether an appeal is raising £50 million, or £500,000. I believe that the strategies we used for the Hospital will apply equally well elsewhere, although I would stress that the example it sets applies mainly to the one-off capital appeal."

**Q** "What are the key elements?"

"Undoubtedly the three most important elements of an appeal are the cause, the leadership and the overall strategy."

The cause, although not in the control of the Appeal Director, has an important influence on the way the appeal is handled. No cause is as emotive as sick children: it will always have many benefactors and supporters. But, while some causes are intrinsically more marketable than others, the success of any appeal is dependent on the use of correct fundraising and marketing strategies.

Obviously the overall leadership for an appeal is vested in a charity's Trustees. Sometimes a separate development trust is established to raise funds for a capital appeal. Initially, detailed advice should be sought, from a suitable solicitor, on the best legal entity for the appeal and other requirements, such as registration with the Charity Commission and the Inland Revenue.

But in this case, I refer to leadership as the Chairman of the appeal. He or she is a crucial factor as far as the potential success of the appeal is concerned. It may be possible to succeed if you have an excellent chairman or an expert director, but if you do not have either, your chances of success are slight.

The Wishing Well Appeal had the best known parents in the country as Patrons, Their Royal Highnesses The Prince and Princess of Wales. Undoubtedly, their close involvement had a real effect on the standing of the appeal and the support it generated. With a smaller charity the appointment of well-known patrons helps immensely because it

gives a stamp of approval to the charity and to the project in question. When people are looking at an appeal brochure, they do tend to flip through to the page where all the names are listed to see who they know and to make sure that the project is backed by influential and reputable supporters."

## Q "How important is the phasing of an appeal?"

"It's absolutely crucial. The classic appeal strategy has three phases - research and planning, the private appeal and the public appeal.

I am often asked for advice on setting up an appeal. Before I give it, I ask the charity concerned to ask itself some key questions. As an easy way to remember all the questions which must be answered, I have produced a checklist which I call **BROADWORD**. This is the information a charity should assemble at the very early stages to put into a preliminary report: it goes as follows.

**B** Background: how did the charity come into being, what is its history?

**R** Role: what is its current role nationally and internationally?

**O** Others: are there any others in the same field - are they competitors - are they doing the same thing or do they differ - should you co-ordinate with them - how do you avoid duplication?

**A** Aims: what are your organisation's aims - is there a corporate plan for, say, the next five years? (Your charity's last annual report and accounts should be available to potential donors)

**D** Distinguished Supporters: the preliminary report should mention their names - they may be individuals or organisations - the Government's input is very useful.

**S** Sticking Point: the problem (explain the situation which needs to be overcome).

**W** Way Out: the solution to that problem. For the Great Ormond Street Appeal, the problem was that the hospital's facilities were inadequate and run-down and the solution was the redevelopment plan.

**O** Operational Expertise: emphasise the fact that you have the right team to handle the project. They should be suitably qualified, whether they are social workers or project managers.

**R** Revenue: the capital costs and running costs must be detailed separately. Some charities think nothing of going out to raise capital costs without having the revenue assured. Potential donors need to be reassured on this point: the last thing they want to do is to put their money into a "white elephant".

**D** Delivery of Funds: the means that will be used to raise the necessary money. This section will increase as the fund-raising strategy becomes more defined. However, a donor will want to know that experienced professional advice will be used to produce a comprehensive strategy and that well qualified staff will be recruited to handle this crucial factor.

What the **BROADWORD** Checklist demonstrates is that a tremendous amount of thinking and work has to go into preparing an appeal before starting to plan to raise the money. When there are answers to the **BROADWORD** questions, they should be recorded, as simply as possible, and developed as the preliminary report is expanded."

## Q "What happens after the preliminary report has been produced?"

"Suitably qualified volunteers should then be recruited to hold key positions on different committees, or panels, and the terms of reference and area of operation of each of these groups should be clearly explained in a fundraising strategy document. This structure is backed by a small team of appeal staff

with the relevant knowledge and experience to guide and develop the campaign.

Once the relevant leadership and panel members have been recruited, and the project details are comprehensive and convincing, a well designed appeal brochure should be produced which will be used to obtain major gifts. It is wise to obtain sponsorship for the publication as it avoids the accusation that you have spent substantial funds before raising any. Such sponsorship is attractive from the donor's point of view as it gives high recognition for the support involved."

## Q "Are there any special things to consider when approaching companies?"

"There are a number of additional points to consider when involving business people. They will require answers to the following.

- Do the figures make sense? Have they really been thought through? Have you claimed Government support where it is available?
- Do you know how to raise funds? (Understandably, they will not want to be associated with a failure).
- What do they get for their money? In other words, will suitable accreditation be given?
- Is there a shopping list so that they can associate their gift with the area which most interests them? For example, do opportunities exist for: naming areas; contributing 'gifts in kind'; sponsoring particular items; linking a sponsor's name in other ways; and will their support be suitably publicised?

And, of course, charities should take care to link their name with donors or sponsors of high repute because the good name of their organisation is one of their most valuable assets."

**Q** "Is it always possible to raise the necessary funds?"

"Having worked out exactly what the task is, and what the costs are, it is then necessary to think carefully about the feasibility of raising the money. No Appeal Director can promise that a certain amount of money is going to be raised, but you should have taken some fairly detailed soundings to be sure that you are being realistic."

Napoleon preferred his generals to be lucky, rather than clever. I believe it is essential for Appeal Directors to feel lucky. They can then fly kites in the confident belief that some of them will stay up in the sky. However, there is a more scientific way of preparing to be lucky, which entails being disciplined in approach.

You start by researching your constituency. By talking to those who have been closely involved with the charity, or the project, you can list suitable contacts who have helped the charity in the past. Look into its history, even research which older families have helped, because today's relatives may become involved in view of the historical links. Consider who cares, who is involved and who is helped by the project. What about the local community it serves?

Research should include reviewing other appeals in the market and care should be taken not to start a major appeal at the same time as another which is similar. For instance, the Charing Cross Medical Research Centre Appeal took place six months after Barts Hospital's appeal for medical research. The result was that some companies declined to support Charing Cross because they had just donated to a similar appeal run by their "local" hospital in the City.

Detailed approach lists must be drawn up of potential major donors - wealthy individuals, grant-making trusts - which give to your type of project - and companies. Once recruited, your influential volunteers can help you draw up lists of wealthy people and office volunteers can look for press cuttings on wealthy individuals to help to expand the list.

Trusts are listed in various directories, for instance, the Directory of Grant Making Trusts, published by the Charities Aid Foundation. Each Trust's terms of reference are vital and submissions must be precisely aimed.

Dependent on the project (location, type and scope of activity), so the companies you list can be prioritised into those more likely to support because of logical links with your concern."

**Q** "How does one go about the business of approaching potential donors?"

"Having researched the constituency and potential major donors, it is wise to "sound out" a few potential donors, to tell them about the plans, and to ask if they would be prepared to donate, and at what levels. Sometimes people will make conditional gifts dependent on the success of the appeal. This is one way to avoid committing themselves to something which might fail. If possible, these soundings should be made by people at the highest level through a personal contact."

**Q** "How important is it to ensure that the fundraising is co-ordinated?"

"It's absolutely vital to make sure that you have co-ordinated your own organisation's other fundraising. We had this problem with the Charing Cross Appeal because the hospital was constantly approaching all sorts of trusts and companies for a whole variety of projects. The same thing existed with the Wishing Well Appeal, as the Hospital had long-standing volunteers raising money for parents' support, for medical research and other on-going fundraising appeals for specific needs.

Yet if these small, on-going appeals were to approach any of the major potential donors at the same time as the larger appeal, they would have seri-

ously prejudiced the prospects of the main appeal. (Most companies would much prefer to give £500 to a small project than be asked specifically to give £50,000). It is a very difficult task to get all the charities in a hospital to co-ordinate fundraising for their important work for the greater good of the organisation as a whole. Setting up co-ordination like this does not make you popular, initially, until people understand how the ad hoc approaches from all directions can really hamper an appeal.

At Charing Cross, we received a letter from a large insurance company saying that they would not support our appeal because they had received two approaches from the Hospital, at the same time, and this proved we were not well organised. This letter was extremely helpful because, as soon as it was circulated amongst the medical staff, my recommendations were accepted and from then on we had much better co-ordination."

**Q** "How do you go about setting the appeal target?"

"It is wise to keep the appeal target flexible for as long as practicable because new factors will become apparent all the time, both on the project side and in the fundraising feasibility study. The constituency for the fundraising is usually researched at the same time as all the project details are being pulled together for presentation to potential donors."

**Q** "Would you ever recommend that an appeal should raise its target in more than one tranche?"

"In my view it's a waste of time to try to raise the target sum in two tranches, because much the same preparation is needed each time. Donors do not like being asked to give twice and, usually, the bigger the target, the bigger the gifts. This is because people tend to give as a proportion of the target.

When fixing a target, charities often consider only the very minimum they need in order to achieve their objective. What they should take into account is that, after a high profile appeal, they cannot go back to the public in any substantial way for a considerable number of years. Therefore, they should aim to raise enough to cover some future expenditure, using the appeal as a vehicle upon which to enhance their profile and to improve their on-going fundraising.

If your research shows your appeal may not receive a very good response, you might have to consider economising on your project, but it is always worth trying for the maximum before cutting your costs to the bare bones.

In the planning phase, one of the factors I can rarely get people to address seriously is what they do if they overshoot the target. In this way charities often miss opportunities because they have not really decided upon their next priority should the appeal succeed."

### Q "How important is leadership?"

"Once again, it really is vital. The Chairman has to have the right contacts and be well respected by the establishment or he (or she) will not be able to get top "captains of industry" to serve under his leadership. If the size of the appeal justifies it, he should arrange such supporters into 'panels' ('committees' is a less well-liked term). In the case of the Wishing Well Appeal we had a City Panel, a Commerce and Industry Panel, a Marketing Panel and a Special Events Panel. The latter was set up later when we were planning the public phase.

Panel members are recruited because of their influence, contacts or expertise. Usually it is necessary to promise them there will be few meetings and that staff will do all the "leg work" so that the valuable time of those recruited is not wasted."

### Q "How does one find the right Chairman?"

"A lot of research must go into looking for somebody with very strong leverage but who has not been involved with an appeal recently as that would deplete their "asking power". You also have to think about who is going to approach them on behalf of your cause so that you can go in at the highest possible level. Try not to offer the Chairmanship to somebody until you are fairly sure they will accept; this is important because, otherwise, it soon gets around that the job has already been turned down, which can damage the reputation of your appeal before you start.

We were enormously fortunate at the Wishing Well Appeal to have, as our Appeal Chairman, Lord Prior of Brampton, or Jim Prior as he is better known. Apart from being chairman of GEC, he is a well-respected, ex-Cabinet Minister and a popular public figure. He had a wealth of suitably placed friends and contacts to approach and he also attended innumerable fundraising events to raise the profile of the appeal and encourage our tireless supporters."

### Q "So. You've pulled together all the necessary project details, assessed the feasibility of raising the money and found your Chairman. What's the next step?"

"To produce the overall fundraising strategy for your campaign.

The Fundraising Master Plan is a vital tool as it will show all your fundraisers where they fit in; it will define the objectives, scope and territory of each panel, or committee; it will set targets and give a linear calendar to show the timing of each step in the overall programme. Also included will be the legal status of the appeal, how the funds will be handled and invested, and details of the appeal staff and their role.

There can be a great deal of confusion as to what a fundraiser does and does

not do. Very often trustees of a charity will appoint a fundraiser and heave an enormous sigh of relief thinking they can sit back and not dirty their hands with fundraising - which is never a popular occupation. Actually, they are quite wrong because the trustees are often the best people to make the approaches. The fundraiser should help them to devise the correct strategy, to recruit the right 'asking power' and then guide, advise and motivate those people to actually make the approaches on behalf of the charity. In other words, the fundraiser very rarely raises funds directly.

It is always helpful if administrative costs, which must be carefully budgeted, are funded by a donor and many appeals receive free office accommodation and other services as a "gift in kind" from a company donor.

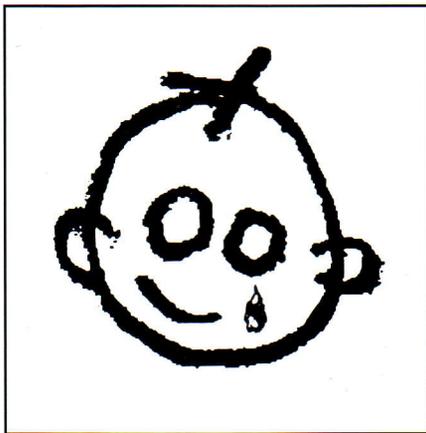
### Q "How do you make sure that people know about the Appeal?"

"You will need a Marketing Plan, with very different strategies in the private and public phases of the Appeal. This document will explain the way your cause will be presented at each phase to its different publics. For the private stage, the Marketing Panel will produce the house style, logo, brochure and stationery all for restricted circulation. For the public stage this remit will expand to cover communications with each sector of your "constituency" and the general public.

I should perhaps mention here that some appeals never do "go public", but merely use the private appeal method of raising the funds they need. This happens, of course, with needs which are not relevant or attractive to the general public."

### Q "Where did the Wishing Well Appeal logo come from?"

"The 'Teardrop' logo, as it is called, grew out of an exercise to draw a face carried out by children in the hospital's ILEA school and playgroup. One of them made an enormous smudge under the eyes of his face which gave our honorary advertising agency, Collett Dickenson Pearce, the idea for the tear. The logo really symbolises the whole essence of Great Ormond Street and the children involved - the combination of the tear and the smile."



**Q "Could I go back to the matter of the 'Private Appeal'. Just why is it necessary?"**

"It is best to "go public" when the appeal already looks like a success. And, of course, people do like to support success. If you launch your campaign to the public on day one, you will still have to do your research/feasibility/recruitment stage for the next four to six months and, if it is learnt that you have raised next to nothing over that period, there will be serious doubts about the prospects for your appeal.

Secondly, and perhaps most importantly, is the risk of what we call "vaccination". It is a fact that a major potential donor will usually contribute at a much higher level if approached personally, by the right person, than if he is left to send in an unsolicited gift as a result of a newspaper article.

It is advisable to have several "lead" gifts in position before making approaches to major companies. These

gifts usually come from wealthy individuals or grant-making trusts, with the occasional company gift in rather exceptional circumstances.

One of the objectives of the private part of the appeal is to amass a substantial sum of money in the bank before the appeal is launched to the public. By this stage, dependent on the type of cause, I believe that you should have at least a third and preferably half your target in cash or pledges. This gives an enormous psychological boost to the start of the public phase."

**Q "Did the Wishing Well Appeal receive any large gifts in this way?"**

"Yes. This activity was led by one of our Appeal Vice Chairmen, who is Chairman and Chief Executive of Lex Service plc. We had approached the Variety Club of Great Britain and received a pledge of £3 million, which was an outstanding "confidence builder" to start us off. We were also immensely fortunate in that the Chairman of the Clore Foundation promised to give £1 million if we could persuade nine individuals to contribute the same amount. This helped our approaches to key grant-making trusts because the precedent had been set to ask for such enormous amounts of money.

We wanted these in place before starting the business appeal, because potential corporate donors needed some evidence that it would be possible to raise such a large target. The chairman of one of our four leading clearing banks believed that the target was too high and he was not convinced that we would be able to achieve it. It was important to change his mind because a small donation from his bank could have resulted in small donations from other banks and given an unfortunate example to other corporate donors."

**Q "What is the best way to go about securing large gifts?"**

"Again "asking power" is important when approaching major potential supporters. It is best to ensure "like approaches like". You might have a staff member present at the relevant meeting, to give some of the more detailed background, but it is equally important that the panel member who is doing the 'asking' is able to say that his own organisation will be making a substantial giftl.

The most significant factor in the success of this stage is that individuals meet face to face to make "the ask". Top businessmen are extremely busy people and, all too often, will try and get away with writing letters. Use all means at your disposal to make sure that they do not take the easy way out!"

**Q "How much should you ask for?"**

"A difficult question! Normally you will have done some detailed research beforehand. For instance you might go to a company and ask them to give you the equivalent of 10% of their last year's charitable budget. On the other hand you might know that their business is doing well and you could ask them for considerably more. How you gear those targets depends on your knowledge of the businesses involved.

On your panels there should be a high level representative from each of the key sectors of the City and industry whose 'inside' knowledge can be utilised. But it is a mistake for them to make approaches in their own sector as this will mean competitor approaches competitor. Of course it is better if your panel member is prepared to approach his suppliers, where his influence can be most effective. In my experience some will do this, whereas others are particularly averse to it.

We were fortunate to recruit excellent members for the City Panel, chaired by the Vice Chairman of Kleinwort Benson, and the Commerce & Industry Panel (chaired by the head of the Rank Organisation). Each member took on several

approaches to close contacts and, in most cases, letters were only used as a follow-up to a personal visit."

### **Q "How interested are major donors in seeing the project at first hand?"**

"Most will ask to see the project before committing themselves. But if they do not, it should be a high priority to persuade them to come to see for themselves and to meet the people involved in running the project. This worked very well with Great Ormond Street, where we went to great lengths to plan the visits to the Hospital of potential donors, and tried to show them the best of the care and the worst of the facilities.

We introduced them to staff, to nurses, to parents and to some of the professors involved in the latest medical research. This gave an overall feeling about Great Ormond Street, about its history and its effectiveness. If you then add a very high level approach by someone they respect, and know well, you have created the most positive setting for a large gift to be made."

### **Q "What should you do if people do not wish to give to the private appeal?"**

"It is important to respond professionally to letters of rejection and at least thank people for taking the time to consider your appeal. If this is handled well, the person who did not give this time might respond favourably in the future. Sometimes companies write to say they are not giving because they have used all their charitable budget. This is a marvellous opportunity for you to write back and thank them for their letter and let them know that you will come back to them at the appropriate time."

### **Q "Tell me about the Public Appeal."**

"While the private appeal is in progress, all the plans for the public appeal must be prepared. This means considering requirements for additional staff, looking into computer and filing systems, and preparing for the extra flow of money. In this we had considerable assistance from management consultants Arthur Young (now Ernst & Young).

At the Wishing Well Appeal our policy was to keep our costs to a minimum. To do this we recruited fifty volunteers to support the appeal office during its hectic public appeal. Most of them contributed two or three days a week and undoubtedly our "engine room" would have ground to a halt without them.

At the same time the marketing panel takes on a different role and starts to prepare for a public campaign using all the different methods available."

### **Q "How important is marketing?"**

"One of the most important factors in the success of the Wishing Well Appeal was the attention given, from the earliest stages, to marketing. For our marketing panel we assembled a very talented group of people, chaired by the then Chief Executive of United Biscuits. We had a representative from a major advertising agency, a leading public affairs advisor, the Chief Executive of the largest sales promotion firm in this country, a publisher and one or two other experts from the communications and media fields. Through this group we had access to the best possible marketing strategy from the very start of the appeal."

### **Q "Why did you choose the Wishing Well name?"**

"Almost up until the time of the public launch the Appeal was still referred to as the Great Ormond Street Children's Hospital Redevelopment Appeal - quite a mouthful. We knew, between the

planning phase and the launch of the public phase, we had to create a short and snappy name which would roll off the tongue easily. Additionally, we needed a separate appeal name to differentiate redevelopment funds from the hospital's general charitable income.

In the end our sales promotion agency, International Marketing Promotions, came up with a joint promotion to be used with a department store which said, "the store wished Great Ormond Street well" and "throw your money into the Wishing Well". It occurred to me that this could be the name for which we had all been searching.

I asked the Hospital's archivist to do some research on whether a link had ever existed between a Wishing Well and Great Ormond Street. To our delight he found that, behind the original hospital site, there had been a wishing well fountain into which children used to throw coins to wish for good health. It seemed as if fate had decided for us, and the name, when raised at our Executive committee, was immediately accepted."

### **Q "How did you launch the Public Appeal?"**

"Time and effort went into choosing the right time, and day even, to launch the appeal. In the end we launched on the 27th October 1987 which turned out to be shortly after 'Black Monday'! Of course this could not have been foreseen and we were lucky it did not have a more crucial affect on our results."

We held a major press conference at the Hospital, which was linked by satellite to Highgrove, as our Patron, The Prince of Wales, opened the appeal. We knew, without the full co-operation of the press, we would never reach such a widespread audience and that they would help further because anything to do with Great Ormond Street and sick children is "news". In the event, members of the press showed enormous good will and personal commitment to the Hospital.

We had massive press coverage as a result of the press conference and then we planned to "drip-feed" stories to keep the appeal in the public eye and to raise the whole profile of the hospital in general. This we achieved through our voluntary public relations subgroup whose members included representatives from four or five public relations agencies."

### **Q "Did you have any immediate follow-up plans?"**

"Two days after our launch, the Variety Club opened their appeal for us. On 4th December, the Princess of Wales visited the hospital at the same time as "Father Christmas" (alias Jimmy Tarbuck), which resulted in front page coverage in most national newspapers. As you know, following this, on 30th December, you presented a ninety-minute BBC television documentary about the work of the hospital. Called "A Fighting Chance", it had enormous impact. In anticipation of a flood of responses, the Midland Bank had most generously agreed to receive all our mail for the next three months. Their Chairman Designate was the Treasurer for our appeal, and they gave us considerable help from the start."

### **Q "Did you advertise the Appeal?"**

"Most certainly. Soon after the launch, extensive advertising began with double page spreads in all the national papers. The space was sponsored by the Midland Bank and the media owners gave us the equivalent amount of free space. At the same time, a national poster campaign was launched at sites provided by Mills & Allen, and this gave high visibility to the appeal logo. The advertising agency also produced a cinema commercial which 'won' awards, in common with much of the material they produced for us. I should add that all

these promotional tools were at no cost to the appeal."

### **Q "What other forms of promotion did you use?"**

"A great many. Publishing formed another wing of the marketing panel, which was relevant because Great Ormond Street has strong historical links with the publishing world. J. M. Barrie bequeathed to the hospital the copyright for Peter Pan, and Charles Dickens used to raise funds for the hospital by reading "A Christmas Carol". We were very fortunate to continue this tradition as numerous publications were written to benefit the appeal.

We also promoted our profile with merchandising items such as T-shirts, key fobs, pens, posters and Christmas Cards, which were widely distributed through our regional groups and the Wishing Well shop opposite the hospital where, at the height of the appeal, we raised in excess of £2,000 a day. We were also involved in direct mail and had a policy of writing back to any level of donor (no matter how small the gift) because we wanted to counteract the view that, with such a large target, to send a small gift was just a drop in the ocean. When building a long-term donor base for a charity it is often the smaller donors who become the ongoing regular supporters. In addition, many of the donors were children and naturally they deserved our closest attention."

### **Q "The Wishing Well Appeal ran some highly successful events. Are there any important points to watch out for?"**

"When involving others in running special events on behalf of charity, it is advisable to look into their credentials, to make sure that they have budgeted carefully and to be sure that the good name of the charity is not jeopardised. In addition, some charities go to

enormous lengths to run highly imaginative events without being very careful about the cost-to-income ratio. Many special events actually lose money, which is disastrous for the reputation of the charity concerned.

We passed on to our regional appeals the smaller special events, whereas those that we felt could be serious "money spinners" (in the region of £100,000 net) were developed by our Special Events Panel with backing from a small, in-house specialist team. The Special Events Panel was co-chaired by the Chief Executive of TVS and the International President of the Variety Club. Panel members included a partner from accountants Stoy Hayward who was responsible for the financial accounting of both Band Aid and Live Aid, and several key people from TVS, including the Head of Drama.

The best way of raising money on a special event is to attract television coverage and then there is no problem in obtaining major sponsorship to cover the costs of the event. All the tickets, programme sales, raffles and other potential fund-raising facets are then clear profit to the charity. But I cannot say that this is easy to achieve.

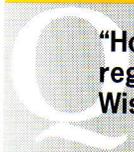
Because our policy was to keep staff numbers to a minimum, in most cases we worked with other individuals, or organisations, who were responsible for running the event. Our role was to guide and advise them to ensure that maximum funds were raised. A good example of this was the Penguin Swimathon. This event was run by the London Youth Games who invited us to join them, having raised £80,000 through this event the previous year. We developed the event with them and were able to involve TVS who advised on dramatisation. We also invited our patron, the Princess of Wales, to open the event and introduced the organisers to United Biscuits who then provided substantial sponsorship. There were over 6,000 swimmers and a total of £646,000 was raised for the appeal. This is an example of how, through partnership, an event can be built and have many spin-offs apart from raising money."



**"Tell me about the joint promotions you ran."**

"As a one-off appeal, we focussed more attention on joint promotions with companies than is normally the case because we knew that association with the good name of the hospital would be valuable to them. Soon after we launched the appeal, we had a joint promotion with Mars whereby 5p was sent to the Charity for every Mars Bar wrapper returned to the company. This produced a guaranteed £100,000 for the appeal. Many other joint promotions were set up and approximately £4 million was raised in this way. The added advantage of joint promotions with companies is that it publicises the appeal at the same time as raising guaranteed money.

There is one cautionary point I should make: that if a charity sells itself too cheaply, and there are too many joint promotions going on at the same time, eventually they will have difficulty finding major sponsors. So care should be taken to have a strategy worked out in advance, involving expert advice. We were advised by our sales promotion agency and our honorary lawyers - Turner Kenneth Brown - who specialise in the area (termed intellectual property)."



**"How important was regional support for the Wishing Well Appeal?"**

"In order to ensure that the plans for the launch of the appeal did not "leak" in advance, and spoil the impact we needed to achieve, in the main we did not start to recruit our local groups until after the appeal had been launched. Many of the county chairmen were found through personal introductions. Some were parents, nurses or others who would be ideal ambassadors for our cause.

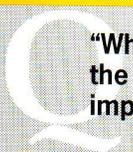
Eventually we had eighty-five groups in the counties and metropolitan boroughs,

but we avoided areas in near proximity to other children's hospitals.

In many instances the valiant work of our local groups was backed by support from large companies, on a national scale. One such example was Tesco plc, who raised a magnificent £2 million with the intense and imaginative involvement of their staff, suppliers and customers.

Substantial help came from numerous national associations and societies who were specially targeted. These included the Police and Fire Services, Armed Forces, Rotary Clubs, Womens' Institutes and every type of young people's organisation. Foremost amongst these were the Scouts and Guides who raised a phenomenal £850,000 for us.

The dedication and inspiration of our groups seemed to know no bounds and soon they became the driving force of the appeal. Indeed, like an ocean liner moving along at full steam, it was difficult to turn off their efforts when we announced the achievement of the target. Instead I am glad to say that a good number of them continued with events they had planned but included local children's charities as joint beneficiaries. In this way many thousands of pounds were raised for other important causes."



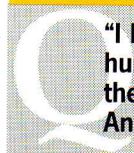
**"What particular aspect of the fund-raising activities impressed you most?"**

"Apart from our delight, during the public appeal, at seeing so many thousands of people sharing with us the responsibility of raising the necessary funds, we were most touched by the response we received from children. From tiny tots to energetic teenagers, they swelled the fund with pennies and pounds and with every sort of "thon" you can imagine: walkathons, swimathons, danceathons, silenceathons and even a dressathon. This was when a 14-year-old girl did a sponsored dress and raised £35. She squeezed into 125 items of clothing, including 14 pairs of knickers. Her mother had to help her dress as she

could not even bend down to touch her toes.

Eight-year-old Sarah, who suffers from muscular atrophy, spent six days riding her pony from Hampshire to London and raised an incredible £17,000. Louise, aged 9, played her recorder in Ascot's No 2 car park, after the races each day, and raised £900.

The theme of children helping children, with outstanding enthusiasm and ingenuity, was quite infectious and a staggering £1.5 million was raised by schools alone."

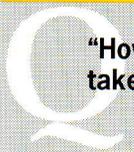


**"I know that you enlisted hundreds of volunteers for the Wishing Well Appeal. Any words of advice here?"**

"Good communication with volunteers and staff is essential, as well as with all the different panels and groups working to help you. In the original brief, it is necessary to explain clearly the terms of reference of each group and how they all fit into the master plan.

Without this clarity the volunteers could well duplicate work. To avoid this situation, you need to circulate regular newsletters, hold numerous briefings and keep people feeling "part of the family".

Throughout the appeal, fundraisers must keep in close touch with the "service providers" of the charity. Our appeal office received continuous support and advice from the Hospital's General Manager, the medical and nursing staff and the administration team."



**"How long does an Appeal take?"**

"With a major national appeal it is normal to allow at least a year for planning, research and recruitment, a year for the private appeal and another for the public phase. The Great Ormond Street appeal took nearer two years to plan and,

to be "on the safe side", we allowed two years for the public appeal. In the event, we only needed just over a year of the public appeal to gather the necessary funds as we were raising a regular £2 million a month at the height of the public's response. And there was no need to launch the extensive international appeal we had planned - although considerable funding did come from overseas."

**Q "What about the costs of raising all these funds?"**

"Obviously, the cost of on-going fundraising is much higher than it is for a capital appeal, which has the possibility of attracting large gifts. A one-off appeal should aim to keep its cost-to-income ratio to well below 10%. In our case, administration costs were 2% but they were sponsored and, therefore, cost the Appeal nothing. Fundraising costs were also about 2%. This low level was achieved as a result of the substantial number of 'gifts in kind' which were forthcoming from corporate donors."

**Q To conclude, why do you think the Wishing Well Appeal achieved such a wide response?"**

"I believe it has to be due to the deep affection many people feel for Great Ormond Street Hospital and the detailed planning and sophisticated marketing techniques used to communicate the fact that the Hospital needed help.

Great Ormond Street has a very special effect on all those who come into contact with it. Remarkable achievements and human tragedies are almost daily occurrences. Parents feel great anxiety to think that their child is ill enough to be referred there, yet relief to know they will receive the best possible medical and nursing care. They are supported by other parents, by volunteers, social workers, teachers and chaplains - apart from the dedicated doctors and nurses - all trying to lighten their load and to sustain them at a critical time for any family.

But emotive causes do not always raise all the money they need. So, because we could not afford to fail, we used every opportunity and technique at our disposal to ensure success, and this meant patience and detailed planning to develop a four year programme. And the response we received - not only in funds, but in approval for the strategy used - more than justified the careful approach we adopted.

It is a well-known statistic that, with most one-off appeals, about 80% of the funds come from 10% of the donors. Great Ormond Street with its wide popular appeal had an unusual result, in that it received 40% of the funds it required from those giving or raising amounts of less than £1,000.

To have been part of the Wishing Well Team was a great privilege. And to be in on the start and the finish was particularly exciting and rewarding. If our experience proves anything it must be that careful, detailed planning and imaginative marketing can make a world of difference."

Finally, when I give talks about the appeal, and how it was planned, a hand always goes up from somebody saying, "Well, it's all very well for you. Great Ormond Street was one of the most emotive causes - but what about the unpopular causes, how does one approach them?" Of course each project is different and needs special handling, but the same principles apply. You have to research your subject very carefully and identify all the salient points; you must look at the constituency and find out who cares. After all, the fact that the questioner is there in the audience proves that **somebody** cares."