

Every year many thousands of people go missing, leaving behind families and friends who search and hope for their safe return.

Laurence from Bristol found himself in this situation and told us: "Earlier this year I lost my best friend, Lewis. Having met at University, we set out to explore a new city together but tragically this was cut short. He was missing for three weeks until devastatingly the worst was realised, through complete misfortune he was

If you are a fearless thrill-seeker you can sign up to jump at an airfield near you at a time of your choosing. It's an exhilarating, once in a lifetime experience which you'll never forget. But fear not, we have a range of events designed to help you be a lifeline. Our friendly team will support and encourage you every step of the way with fundraising materials and top tips.

CHALLENGE EVENTS



for being part of Missing People!

taken from us. Those three weeks of searching and hoping were an incredible test

and trauma to family and friends; something I wouldn't wish on anyone. To build something positive and in memory of Lewis, I knew nothing would make him laugh or smile more than me profusely sweating and shaking as I throw myself out of a plane. So myself and his friend Mario did exactly that. It was terrifying but we'd definitely do it again!"

Together, Laurence and Mario raised an amazing £1,340 for Missing People. Thank you, chaps, for your bravery. We salute you!



May 2018



missing people

Registered charity in England and Wales (1020419) and in Scotland (SC047419)



GET TOGETHER

The newsletter from Missing People



Spring is in the air, a time of new beginnings and I am delighted to introduce you to your first edition of **gettogether**.

In this issue, we'll be reflecting on the great impact you have made towards delivering some of our vital projects. Our county lines research, identifying what is now a common form of child exploitation, is a prime example of some of the ground breaking work we have carried out with your support.

How charities ensure the safety of their beneficiaries has been in the news a lot recently. Missing People takes safeguarding very seriously and have recently conducted a review. How we look after you as our supporter is important too. You can read about our promise to you by visiting www.missingpeople.org.uk/promise

Part of our fundraising promise is to find out how best to keep you updated on our work and ways to get involved. Before Christmas we asked you to "opt-in" to our communications. New General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) mean that soon, we'll only be able to contact you if you've given us permission to do so.

Please reply by the 25th May 2018

to tell us your communication preferences. Opting in means you choose to hear about our work and the difference you make, and sends a powerful message of hope and solidarity to everyone affected by a disappearance.

Jo Youle

Jo Youle
Chief Executive



OPTING IN

If you haven't done so already, please complete the form enclosed with this newsletter and send it back to us using the freepost envelope.

"If I need them I know they are at the end of the phone. I have felt very emotional at times, and they have always been happy to listen."

Child of a missing parent



CALENDAR OF EVENTS:

- **London to Brighton Cycle**
Sunday 16 September
- **Royal Parks Half Marathon**
Sunday 14 October, London
- **Skydives**
National and at a date of your choosing

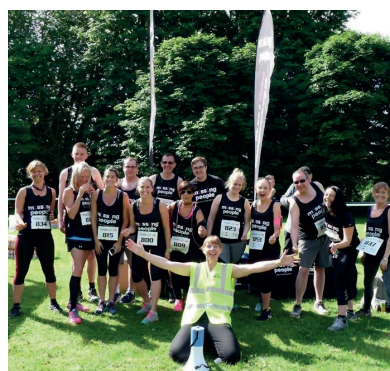
Sign up or simply find out more by visiting www.missingpeople.org.uk/challenge

MISSING PEOPLE 10K

Twenty five years ago Missing People was formed by sisters Mary and Janet in south west London. Born out of concern for a local missing woman, community spirit remains at the core of the charity's work. One event which captures this so brilliantly is our annual race, the Missing People 10k.

Organised by our friends the Bearcat Running Club as the Turks Head 10k, we are invited each year to bring runners to join the race on 10 June and raise funds for Missing People. In Twickenham, right at the heart of where Missing People is based, this is a chance to meet many of the team and make a difference.

With a picturesque route and buzzing crowd it's always a day to remember. Why not join us this year to cheer along our runners?



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www.missingpeople.org.uk info@missingpeople.org.uk [/missingpeople](https://www.facebook.com/missingpeople) [@missingpeople](https://www.instagram.com/missingpeople)

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A LIFELINE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE EXPLOITED BY GANGS

Over the past year Missing People has been leading the national response to the emerging issue of 'county lines'; an increasingly common form of criminal exploitation where adults, who are sometimes in gangs, coerce children through intimidation, threats and violence, to carry drugs outside of major cities to be sold where there is less competition and availability.

Children as young as twelve are going missing from home or care for days, weeks or months. Trafficked to remote locations, staying in squalid conditions and isolated, they are at the mercy of gang masters, local drug users and rival gangs. If they try to break free or resist they face kidnap, physical attacks, torture and sexual assault. Threats may be made against their family and some will be deceived into debt bondage – meaning they have to continue 'working' indefinitely to pay off what they are told they owe.

The National Crime Agency's annual assessment of the issue paints a harrowing picture of increasing numbers of children being exploited and increasing levels of violence. It is estimated that at least 720 'lines' - drug dealing routes out of major cities - already exist, with 80% of police forces seeing this type of exploitation happening in their area.

How Missing People is helping

Josie, our Policy and Campaigns Manager, has been working with the mothers of exploited children to better understand how children can be protected. Through our work we also hope to give these women a voice as many have been fighting for their children alone and unheard for years.

"I became involved with Missing People and met Josie because I was personally touched by county lines, and I really don't know where I'd be without them.

Missing People's support has not only been immense but effective and invaluable. They have been influential and are clearly driven in their objectives to do the right thing for children who are caught up in this scourge.

What they do, they do incredibly effectively and with sincerity. I am so glad to have had them on side and providing guidance during an incredibly challenging time, when nobody else had the comparative expertise or insight into county lines - **The mother of a boy who was first exploited into county lines at just 14 years old.**

Last year, Missing People received funding from the Home Office to pilot a new support service for exploited children and their families. When a child goes missing and they're suspected to be at risk we will arrange a phone call from one of our expert workers to both the child and their family. We are able to provide space and time to listen to what has happened, assess what harm they have experienced and provide one-to-one support going forward.

We hope that by understanding a child going missing as an early warning sign of criminal exploitation we can step in earlier – preventing criminalisation, serious harm or even greater tragedies.

SPOTLIGHT ON

In the past twelve months, almost 200 volunteers donated an incredible 11,000 hours of time supporting teams across the charity from HR to Research, Fundraising and Communications and our front line services which directly support missing people and their families.

Mike is a helpline volunteer who, after specialist training, responds to calls, texts and emails from people in crisis. He recently took a call from a vulnerable young person who was away from home. By offering support and reassurance on the call, Mike made the caller feel able to talk about their situation and they agreed for him to pass a message that they were safe to their parents.

Mike passed this message to the anxious parents, who were also able to leave a message in case the young person called again. Thankfully, they did call back, and they also expressed their gratitude at the support Mike had offered.

We have also seen new volunteer projects take great steps forward. We trained our first team of volunteers to deliver our newest service, 1-2-1 Chat; an online chat service designed for children and young people.

We work with people who access our services, to put their voices at the heart of everything we do, and are delighted to see a 13% increase in applications in the past year from people whose lives have been affected by a disappearance.

Like Mike, our volunteers provide a lifeline and we would love you to get involved. Find more info here: www.missingpeople.org.uk/volunteer Or pop us an email: volunteer@missingpeople.org.uk

MISSING PEOPLE HIGHLIGHTS

Many of you joined our annual Carol Service at St Martin-in-the-Fields on December 11th. It was a poignant evening attended by families who have a loved one missing, special guest Sir Trevor McDonald joined us on the night and the Missing People Choir sang. We are delighted to announce that more than £10,000 was raised. Incredible!!

This year's Carol Service will be held on the 10th December, more information will be shared closer to the time.



"It isn't our job to fix anything, just to listen"
Inside the Missing People helpline



Image: Paul Grover/Telegraph

We were lucky enough to be chosen as one of three charities to benefit from the Telegraph's Christmas Appeal. Readers donated

to the appeal from November until January, and eight articles about the charity and the families we support appeared in the paper. This was a fantastic way to raise awareness of the charity, building on the momentum of the choir's success on Britain's Got Talent.