



In memory of Nicola: Above, members of the Nicola Corry Support Foundation mark the organisation's fifth birthday; left, Nicola Corry, a young mother who died from cancer

Main photograph: Gavin Crilly

Five years of fundraising in Nicola's name

VOLUNTEERS from a charity set up in memory of a young mother who died from a rare form of cancer have celebrated the organisation's fifth birthday.

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Members of the Nicola Corry Support Foundation toasted the charity's success with a cruise around Bristol's Floating Harbour aboard a Bristol Packet boat.

The wet weather did not dampen their enthusiasm as they toasted raising more than £60,000 in the five years the charity has been up and running.

The Nicola Corry Support Foundation was set up in June 2006 following Nicola's untimely death the previous year.

Claire Bullock, Nicola's elder sister and the chair of trustees for the foundation, said: "Three days after giving birth to her son Alfie, Nicola was diagnosed with DSRCT - desmoplastic small round cell tumour - an extremely rare form of soft tissue sarcoma.

"Nicola was having to stay in hospital for five days at a time to have chemotherapy treatment every three weeks.

"We just found a massive gap in the support for this for those people who have children.

"We had a strong support network of friends and family, but it got to the stage where we were all working, her partner had to go back to work and we wondered what we would have done if we hadn't had help from immediate family."

The Nicola Corry Support Fund was originally created to help Nicola and her family in the weeks and months after her diagnosis, after they found there was a lack of specific support.

The fund provided financial support for pre-school nursery fees, complementary treatments and holidays.

Nicola, who was a hairdresser and lived in Bradley Stoke, died in 2005 at the age of 25, two-and-a-half years after she was diagnosed.

But her friends and family decided to continue with Nicola's legacy and set up the foundation to continue fundraising.

Mrs Bullock, 33, who works in cancer services for the NHS, said: "When she died we decided to continue with the charity to help people in similar situations. We have discovered that there are lots of people out there going through similar things, and they can write to us and apply for grants."

During its five years as a registered charity the foundation has held dozens of fundraising events, from cycling challenges and "promise" auctions to dinner dances and craft fairs.

It has donated more than £60,000 in grants, helping families with childcare fees, car insurance costs to help make travel to get treatment easier, counselling costs, alternative therapy and paying for breaks away to enable families to spend quality time together.

Mrs Bullock and the foundation's volunteers raised a glass in Nicola's memory on Friday.

She said: "We are only a small charity, volunteer-run by friends and family of Nicola, but we are expanding.

"We are delighted to have achieved so much and supported so many people. It is nice to do something positive in Nicola's name, to help other people and to keep her memory alive.

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