



the insider

Summer 2026

FUNDRAISING SPECIAL

Together, we can make a difference!

Research
Updates

New
Research
Call out

Future
Plans

Real
Fundraising
Stories



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CICRA is the operating name of Crohn's in Childhood Research Association, a registered charity in England & Wales, number 278212, and in Scotland, number SC040700 | the insider is published by CICRA | Pat Shaw House, 13-19 Ventnor Road, Sutton, Surrey SM2 6AQ 020 8949 6209 | support@cicra.org | cicra.org

Chairman's Message



Dear Friends and Supporters,

Welcome to this special edition of the insider, where we celebrate you—our remarkable fundraisers. While we encountered some delays in preparing our usual Spring edition, we are excited to present this special interim issue in the meantime. Inside, you'll discover numerous examples of extraordinary fundraising efforts, along with the inspiring stories behind them. Hearing people's motivations is always uplifting. Our Autumn edition will be published later this year, as per our usual schedule. Fundraisers from April 2026 onwards will be included in the next issue.

You will also find updates on how your fundraising efforts enable us to make a difference—funding essential research and supporting families. We highlight our Family Information Day in Southampton from earlier this year, our plans to enhance support for families facing a VEO IBD diagnosis, and how we are improving our school support literature.

We recognise that none of this would be possible without you—whether you've fundraised, donated, or made a purchase from our CICRA store. Thank you.

Best wishes,
Graham Lee,
Chair of Trustees



We can only do this, because of you

We are delighted to share that thanks to your fundraising efforts and generosity, we now have enough funds for a new research call out. The trustees have approved this initiative, which will take place later this year. Stay tuned for more details! In the meantime, our existing funded projects are still underway.



Dr Zachary Green's three-year CICRA-funded fellowship continues to make excellent progress. His research is harnessing artificial intelligence and large clinical datasets to predict disease outcomes and personalise treatment for children with IBD. Last year, he published six research papers and is developing tools that could help clinicians identify children who need more intensive treatment much earlier, paving the way for more personalised care in the future.



Billie Nuth's CICRA funded PhD is providing new insights in to the gut barrier and IBD. Her research uses cutting-edge laboratory models to investigate why the gut lining becomes damaged in IBD and how it repairs itself. Having successfully completed her first-year reviews, Billie has already demonstrated that damage to gut cells increases barrier "leakiness" and delays healing—findings that could help identify new treatment targets for children with IBD in the future.

CICRA is proud to have supported a major international study through the **Paediatric IBD (PIBD) BioResource project** led by Professor Holm Uhlig which has provided important new insights into why Crohn's disease and IBD develop in some people. Researchers identified a specific immune system abnormality that may contribute to inflammation in a small group of patients and, for the first time, have helped explain how one of the strongest known genetic risk factors for IBD may influence disease development. The findings are encouraging and have now been published in the New England Journal of Medicine, one of the world's leading medical journals. While this research will not lead to immediate changes in treatment, it represents an important step towards a better understanding of IBD and the development of more personalised treatments in the future.



School support literature review

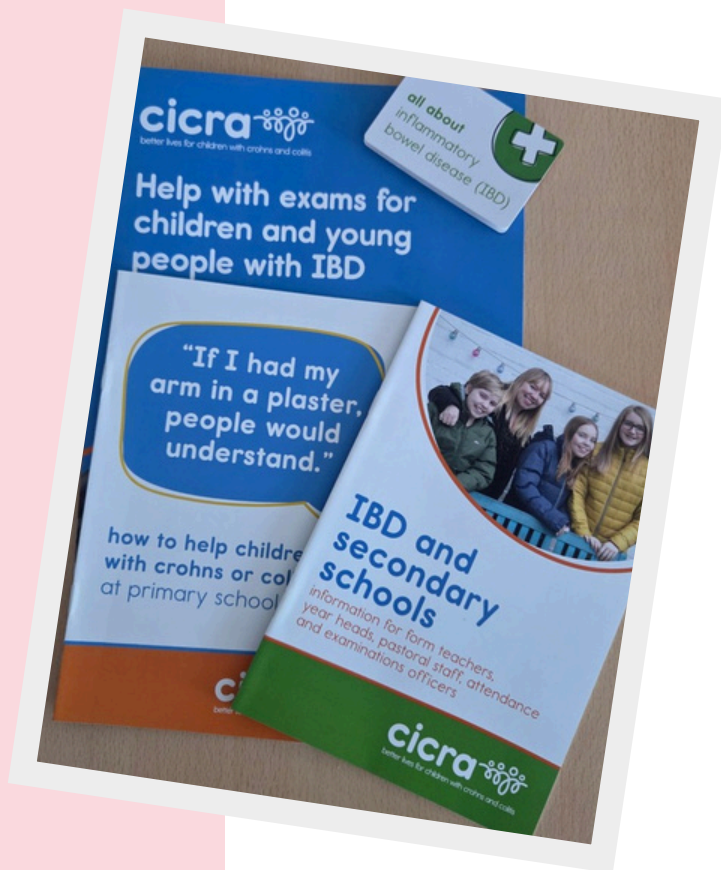
Feedback from members tells us that **school support** is among the most valuable aspects of CICRA support. This summer, we are conducting a comprehensive review of all our current support leaflets to ensure they are as detailed as possible, and incorporate the latest government guidance which is due to be released later this year. We aim to release our new and improved literature later this year once the updated guidance has been published.

What particular things do you find difficult when navigating school and life with IBD?

Let us know at support@cicra.org

Launch of VEOIBD support pack

Recognising the unique needs of infants and very young children with Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD), we are in the process of developing a support pack for parents and caregivers of those diagnosed with Very Early Onset (VEO) IBD. These packs will be provided in hospitals at the time of diagnosis. They will incorporate contributions from consultant paediatric gastroenterologists, IBD nurses, dieticians, and the firsthand experiences of carers, giving support at what we know is an incredibly overwhelming time.



Southampton Family Information Day

Our latest in person family event was a big success. Families who came were able to hear talks from expert medics from the IBD world, before taking part in smaller group discussions where they could hear more personalised inputs and have their queries answered. Younger children were kept entertained by the children's entertainer whilst older children were able to join breakaway groups. It was a joy to see them creating group chats and leaving the event with new friends who know what they are going through. Recordings of the talks given on the day are available on our [YouTube](#) channel:



scan to watch!



An update from Gracie May

You may remember the incredible Gracie May who was camping out in her garden. We were amazed to hear she extended the challenge, with her mum Dionne also joining her in her bell tent for 100 nights.

**Raised
£600**



This took the challenge end date to the end of October. Dionne told us 'I am so proud of Gracie May for all she has done in this challenge, it's been an honour to be part of it, I couldn't think of a more deserving charity'. Gracie May added 'I have really enjoyed this challenge, being able to spread an awareness of IBD and be able to give something back to CICRA for all they have done for me and my family.'

Despite experiencing a bad flare and struggling with pain, cramps and fatigue, Gracie May has shown immense determination and stamina to complete the challenge, as well as doing a podcast with her school for World IBD day 2025. In February we were updated that Gracie May is now on some new medications and had also been diagnosed with Juvenile Idiopathic Arthritis, but was finally seeing light at the end of the tunnel.

We are all in awe of this young lady, who clearly has a great passion to raise awareness of IBD whilst navigating her own relatively new journey with Ulcerative Colitis, having only been diagnosed herself in September 2023 at the age of 13.

If Gracie May or Aidan have inspired you to take on a challenge, please get in touch - It doesn't have to span 6 months like Gracie May's but anything you can do will make a difference!

**Raised
£2,537**

Aidan Saunders Bath Half Marathon

Aidan told us "I was diagnosed with Crohn's disease in 2013 at the age of eight, but I have thankfully been in remission for the last seven years. During the time when I was struggling with my illness, CICRA provided invaluable support through their conferences and away days, and I cannot thank them enough.

The work they do helped me through some very difficult periods, and I wanted to give something back while also challenging myself. For that reason, I decided to run the Bath Half Marathon to raise money for CICRA. I was fortunate enough to significantly exceed my fundraising and finish-time goals, and I am profoundly grateful to be able to give back to such a worthy cause." Thank you Aidan for your support.



Celebrating our amazing fundraisers!

Emily Lewis Newport Half Marathon

In 2020, my younger brother was diagnosed with Ulcerative Colitis. He had just turned 10, and it was the height of Covid. At the time, Crohn's was a term I knew very little about, and Ulcerative Colitis was something I had never even heard of - unsurprising, as both conditions are not as widely recognised as other diseases.

During such an uncertain time, we were directed by doctors to CICRA for support. Their online resources gave us the understanding and awareness we needed to begin navigating this new reality as a family.

It has not been an easy journey from diagnosis to finding stable treatment. Specialist paediatric support can be limited, especially in Wales, and there have been many challenges along the way. However, I always knew that one day I wanted to give back in some way.



Fast forward 6 years, I decided to take on the challenge of running the City of Newport Half Marathon on March 1st to raise money and awareness for this incredible charity. With only six weeks to train, it felt like a huge mountain to climb. Each week my body grew more exhausted, but I stayed motivated knowing that completing this challenge could help other children and families access the same support and reassurance that meant so much to us.

The support and kindness I received from family, friends and even strangers was overwhelming, and I was able to smash my target thanks to them.

It was a truly special day, and this amazing result has inspired me to continue fundraising in the future for children like my brother - perhaps even a marathon this time.



Cardiff Half Marathon

We had three amazing runners in last years event, Mike, Jonathan and Stefan.

Mike signed up through Run for Charity to run the Cardiff Half Marathon. He told us:

‘My reason for running is our son has Ulcerative Colitis. He is now 8 years old but was first diagnosed when he was just 3 years of age. We are under Birmingham Children’s hospital. I do a bit of running anyway and it felt appropriate to maybe do this one for charity.

We do already fundraise for Birmingham Children’s Hospital & Crohns & Colitis UK. I wasn’t planning on any fundraising as such on this occasion but wanted to donate instead, to cover the costs and a donation for CICRA’.

Sadly, Mike’s Grandmother passed away and one of the charities she wanted donations from the funeral to go to was, CICRA, £200 was donated, thank you.

We thank Mike and his family and the wider community for their donations and raising awareness of CICRA at a sad time.

Mike Herbert

**Raised
£850**



‘As someone who was diagnosed with Crohn’s disease when I was younger, in my early 20s, I know how tough it can be and the vital support that can be offered by CICRA. I’m aware of the great work the charity does and the impact IBD has on people’.

Jonathan Mortimore

**Raised
£1277**

‘I have chosen to support CICRA because my 12 year old daughter was diagnosed with ulcerative colitis in 2021. We had some very tough times as all the licensed medication for children did not work but she is now on a trial for tofacitinib which is only licensed as an adult medication at present and this has worked wonders to bring her condition under control and without trials and research there is likely many more treatments that would just not be possible for children.

When Chloe was initially admitted into hospital in 2021, CICRA provided us with a wealth of information before Chloe was discharged home, helping Chloe and our family have some sort of understanding into her diagnosis. They have even provided information to Chloe’s school, ensuring children with Crohn’s Disease/Colitis have fair access to education’.

Stefan Meehan

**Raised
£622**

Do you want to run for CICRA?

Scan the QR code or [**click here**](#) to see what events we have available near you



Sarah McGowan Maidenhead Half Marathon

After having a cold all week, I decided to continue with the run and just enjoy it. On Friday I had reached my £1,000 target, so I was determined to continue.

It was a beautiful but chilly sunny morning, but I prefer running in winter. My niece had also signed up and my son drove us both down to the starting line. The atmosphere was great and lots of people came out to cheer the 2000 runners. I told my niece to run her own race, she's so much younger and fitter!

Off Amanda and I started on the two-lap course keeping at a good pace. We passed my son's house, and all the family were out cheering. Such a big motivation to keep going. The second lap got tough at the 11-mile mark, and it was definitely a mindset to keep going. It was at this stage a woman ran next to me and asked what charity CICRA is. I told her all about your good work and why I was running the half marathon. We chatted for a mile and on she went. That was it, I was on the last mile and all I could think of was all the lovely people who had donated to this amazing charity. Although my legs were screaming at me, I reminded myself of all those suffering with Crohn's and colitis every single day. This was just 2 hours of my life so get a grip!!

As I crossed the finishing line, I was so relieved but more importantly I was so grateful to all the doctors and nurses who are helping my 16-month-old granddaughter. She is now under Great Ormond Street which I know have access to the IBD research needed for her to progress. She is doing well now and has reached the 50 percentiles for weight, and her development is coming on at a weekly basis. She eats anything and everything so we couldn't ask for more.

It has been such a pleasure to deal with CICRA and has put my faith back in charity organisations. Keep up the fantastic work you and your team continue to do.

Sarah has continued her fundraising by giving a Bee Talk to the retired men of a village near her. At the end of the talk, she asked for any donations to go to CICRA, managing to raise another £100. Thank you Sarah, for your ongoing support.



Raised
£1504



Claire Alvarez Manchester Half Marathon

Raised
£568

As an adult who has suffered with Ulcerative Colitis since the age of 20, Claire signed up through Run for Charity to run the Manchester Half Marathon for CICRA. Now a mum herself to a 3-year-old, and with her health in a good place, she wanted to fundraise in the hope her 3-year-old does not get it and said, 'the subject is close to my heart'.

We thank Claire for her fundraising and passion to help others.



Susie Munsie Cambridge Half Marathon

Raised
£2,033

Last August, our daughter, Paige, was diagnosed with ulcerative colitis. Like all families facing an unexpected diagnosis, we've had to learn, adapt, and find strength to overcome the challenges that come with it. And CICRA, along with Paige's fabulous paediatric IBD team at Addenbrookes hospital in Cambridge, have been there to support us every step of the way. So, when I saw CICRA's request for people to fundraise by running the Cambridge Half Marathon it seemed like a daunting but personal challenge.

I've often felt helpless watching my child endure so much pain, cope with invasive procedures, face her fear of needles, and go to school despite her anxieties, so fundraising felt like a small way to stand beside her and show my solidarity.

Raising money for CICRA was an opportunity to say thank you for the incredible work they do supporting families like ours as we navigate life with ulcerative colitis. Their guidance and resources have made a real difference to us. And as we look forward to Paige starting secondary school later this year, it's reassuring to know we'll have CICRA in our corner to help with that transition too.

But this run also became about more than raising money or crossing a finish line. Through months of training in the dark, ice and rain of the wettest winter on record, and overcoming injury only a few weeks before the race, it was also a helpful reminder for Paige, and myself, that even when something feels overwhelming, when we doubt ourselves or feel afraid, we're capable of much more than we think. To have overcome the anxiety and crossed that finish line on International Women's Day with my two daughters supporting me was the icing on the cake.

We're learning that bravery isn't about not feeling scared, but about taking a deep breath, lacing up your trainers anyway and keeping going - one step at a time, even if some steps are smaller, slower or more reluctant than others. I'm in absolute awe of our brave, scared, strong young people showing up every day, however that looks, in spite of it all. Thank you CICRA for the work you do, supporting us to do the hard things and keep going.

Thank you Suzy for being a truly inspirational women, not only to your daughters but anybody who faces a challenge; you have shown how strength can be found, if you dig deep!



A wide-angle photograph of Wells Bishop's palace, a large stone building with a prominent round tower, surrounded by a calm moat. The sky is blue with light clouds.

Ollie and friends Wells Bishop's palace moat race

Raised
£865

My son Oliver was diagnosed with Crohn's Disease in March 2018 and we have completed a few fundraising events since then. I was contacted by one of Ollie's best friends from school and asked if they could raise money for a Crohn's charity of our choice, and we chose CICRA.

On the August bank holiday Monday the boys, Ollie included, competed in the annual moat boat race in Wells. They have raised a massive £865. We are so proud of them all. Ollie was well enough to participate in one of the races and they came 2nd. As a parent of a child with IBD, we felt completely lost until we were directed to your charity. Thank you for all the work you do.

Ollie's friend Jack added "Ollie was diagnosed with Crohns Disease at the age of 8, after having symptoms from the age of 2. It was a long and difficult road to diagnosis which came after he suffered with a bowel blockage and sepsis, we were extremely lucky as we nearly lost him. CICRA have been an amazing support to both Ollie and his family since his diagnosis in 2018.



Their family information days meant Ollie and his parents could meet other families with children with IBD, as well as health professionals. They also provided information for his school and friends so we knew how to support him.

Sometimes we can't see him as much as we would like if he is unwell or in hospital. We wanted to do this to help him as much as possible and show him that we care

Thank you Ollie and your friends Jack, Theo, Maks, Henry, Zac and Alfie for raising awareness and all their support. What great friends!



Interested in supporting CICRA through your company, club, or looking for a corporate partnership?

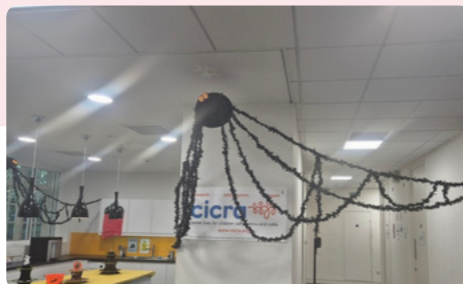


Scan or [click here](#) to find out more!

INTRUM charity of the year 2025

Raised
£1573

Following on from our Autumn newsletter, Intrum carried on having Foodie Festivals and fundraising for CICRA. They had events where all types of foods were cooked by colleagues and sold for £5 a plate, which was a great success.



In January we heard that CICRA had again successfully been nominated and are now the Intrum Reigate Charity of the Year 2026! Thank you to Laura for all your hard work and organising the events.

Making every round count

Ladies Captain Jenifer at **Kingsdown Golf Club** chose to support CICRA as their charity of the year as her granddaughter has IBD. Following our report in our last newsletter, we can now share the total raised over the year was an amazing **£1,670.00**. It was lovely to hear from Jenifer that her granddaughter has now transitioned to adult care and is doing well with the help of medication, even managing to go on a school trip to Rome.

The **Manchester Builders Golf Society** also completed their year of supporting CICRA, having raised an incredible **£1,970.00** over the year.

Thank you to all the golfers and supporters who donated their time and raised awareness; we are truly grateful.

April and Lilah Cake Sale

Raised
£142.50



My daughter April was diagnosed with Crohn's in March and had been really keen to do some fundraising for CICRA - she chose to do a cake sale for her cubs and scouts' groups and raised £142.50 - amazing. She and her best friend Lilah have big plans to repeat this one and do some other things too!

Thank you, April and Lilah for putting on a fantastic cake sale. We would like to thank all the scouts and cubs for supporting your fundraising event. The homemade poster looks as good as the cakes! Well done.





☀ Jane set up an in-memory page to honour the 16-year anniversary of her son Callum passing. They raised **£741** for CICRA, adding to their previously raised total of over **£100,000**. Thank you for your continuing support.

☀ A big thank you to Sevenoaks Primary School for donating **£3,184.57** after hosting and taking part in the 'Knight Frank Schools Triathlon' at Sevenoaks School.

☀ David continued delivering talks adding over **£1,400** to his ongoing total - an amazing **£2,862!** Thank you David.

☀ We thank Alan who took part in the Scottish Half Marathon in August 2025 and raised **£150**.

☀ The Law family are long time supporters and fundraisers. This time Yvonne donated **£225** from her Art sale in September 2025.

☀ We heard from Pete, whose daughter (diagnosed with Crohns disease in October last year) and the rest of her class at Asfordby Primary School baked and sold cakes to raise money for CICRA, raising an amazing **£134**.

☀ Trish donated another **£530** from running her charitable sewing course, having raised over **£22,000** since 2012. Thank you for your incredible support!

☀ We thank Kelly and the Knit & Natter group who raised **£200** by making items to sell at their Cake & Cuppa sale!

☀ A big thank you to Brenda who took part in the Aintree 5k in December and raised **£187.50**. Thank you for taking on a Winter challenge!

☀ Alison Johnston and her line dancing Ladies and Gentlemen donated **£237** from their Christmas raffle and collection box. Alison has been a long-time supporter raising over **£8,000** since joining in 2008- that's dedication!

Ajay London Marathon and The Big Half

Although I couldn't have asked for a better childhood, there were many periods where I had suffered through pain, fatigue, lack of appetite and weight loss. I was diagnosed with Crohns at the age of 3, it had taken a huge toll on my lifestyle and wellbeing mentally and physically. Injected with various medications, being put on strict diets and gaining my daily nutrition through a tube in the nose was a very difficult experience as a child. Being in and out of hospital at such a young age was not only tough for myself but also impacts the whole family.

Although my Crohn's is easier to manage now with different treatments and diet, there are still periods where I can suffer. Once I earned a place at the London Marathon, I knew I had to run for a charity that supports children suffering with this condition as they are currently going through what I went through. Running for CICRA will allowed me to give back to the those who supported me to where I am today, and I know the funds will be put to good use!

After the marathon Ajay said it was 'painful to say the least, but so worth it'. Ajay went on to run The Big Half in September and increased his donation to £1,000. Thank you!



Meet the Fundraiser Taking on the English Channel

Julie Nash will be taking on this huge challenge in 2027, despite previously not being able to swim! She told us why she decided to take on this mammoth task.



CICRA swim caps are available to buy on our online shop! [Get yours here](#)



My son William was diagnosed with Ulcerative Colitis 18 months ago aged just 14 years old, which came as a shock to us all. He then had to navigate coming to terms with the diagnosis alongside hospital appointments and stays, medication, and blood tests. All this when he was approaching the end of his time in secondary school and studying for his GCSE's. It was during a hospital visit that I had the idea of doing a sponsored challenge to raise funds for research into childhood IBD. New treatments have allowed William to live a typical life without restriction

and boundaries. I knew I had to take on a challenge as big as William's and asked him to help me decide what to do. Swimming was an obvious choice as I can't swim, but that wasn't enough. I wanted to do something bigger. I hate the sea, everything about it fills me with dread and the thought of swimming in it until that moment was laughable and unthinkable. So that was it, decision made - William is facing a lifelong medical condition that he never thought he would have to and I am facing a sea swim that I never thought in a million years I would do. In August 2027 I will join a team of other swimmers to attempt a relay swim across the English Channel from England to France. Before that I will be learning to swim, first in a pool then in open water. I will have to overcome the fear I have of the sea and gradually build the distance I swim until I am good enough to take on this mammoth challenge. I have started lessons and although progress is slow, I am determined I will achieve my goal. With time, effort and support from William I am excited with what lays ahead and the money I will raise to support children and young people with inflammatory bowel disease live better lives.



Julie has been keeping us up to date with her progress. Training is going well, swimming 3 times a week. She has been working with a coach to help improve her technique to become more efficient. Since the weather has warmed up she has started training in open water, and although progress is hard and slow, she remains determined to keep going! William is swimming with her once a week for support and encouragement. Those post training ice creams are very well deserved!

Can you help Julie reach her £1000 target? Visit her [fundraising page](#) for updates and to show your support as she takes on this incredible task!



Other ways to fundraise

Thank you

Every donation and every act of support helps us fund research, provide trusted information and ensure no family has to face childhood IBD alone

However you choose to give, you'll make a difference



1. Donate once

Every donation, whatever the size, helps us fund vital research and provide information and support for children and families living with IBD



2. Give monthly

A regular gift helps us plan ahead, ensuring families can continue accessing support whenever they need it.

scan or click
here to
donate



3. Hold your own fundraiser

Cake sales, quiz night, coffee mornings, dress up days, sponsored walks or birthday fundraisers - every event helps raise awareness as well as funds.



7. Celebrate with CICRA

Ask for donations instead of birthday, wedding or anniversary gifts and turn your special occasion in to lasting support for children with IBD.



6. Ask your employer

Many employers will match the money you raise, doubling the impact of your fundraising. Some also offer payroll giving or charity partnerships.



5. Shop our Amazon wishlist

Purchase items that help us in the office, or prizes for our fundraising raffles.



shop here



4. Shop online

You can raise money for CICRA just by doing your normal shop, at no cost to yourself. Check out [Give As You Live](#) or [Easy Fundraising](#) to get started.



8. In Memory

Consider honouring the memory of a loved one by leaving a heartfelt gift instead of flowers at their funeral.



9. Leave a gift in your will

A gift in your Will can help future generations of children living with Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis benefit from better treatments and support.



Every pound raised helps us fund research, provide trusted information and ensure no family has to face childhood IBD alone.



scan or click
here
to find out
more or
get started

Monthly Prize Draw

JOIN THE

cicra 

200+
club!

WIN CASH PRIZES!

- **For only 50p per week**, you can enter the monthly draw
- If your number is selected, you could win a **cash prize of up to £250!**
- It's really that simple! **Support children and families impacted by Inflammatory Bowel Disease** while enjoying the **opportunity to win.**

contact support@cicra.org for more info

Visit our online shop



[head to www.cicra.org/shop/](http://www.cicra.org/shop/)

Christmas 2025 draw results

The draw took place on Monday 15th December.

Prize		Name
1st	£500	D Burnett
2nd	£250	J Chilcott
3 rd	£100	N Beech



Summer 2026 draw results

The draw took place on Monday 13th July.

Prize		Name
1st	£500	C Collins
2nd	£250	M Hawkey
3 rd	£100	C Scott



Thank you to everyone who supported the draws by purchasing tickets. By doing so you've helped us fund vital research. We couldn't do it without you!

Christmas 2026

New designs launching soon!

