

## Holistic fundraising – Gromit Unleashed

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Wallace and Gromit's Grand Appeal



### Introduction

Helen talked about the *Gromit Unleashed* campaign – Helen is the project manager of this and has worked in the charity sector for five years and with Wallace and Gromit's Grand Appeal since 2011. *Gromit Unleashed* saw 80 Gromit sculptures designed by famous artists, designers and celebrities displayed in a public art trail around Bristol. Culminating in an exhibition and public auction the campaign raised £2.3 million for Wallace and Gromit's Grand Appeal to support sick children and their families at Bristol's Children's Hospital.

During this session delegates discovered the secrets of the campaign's success including how marketing and fundraising worked together to deliver *Gromit Unleashed*.

### Presentation

Wallace and Gromit's Grand Appeal is the charity for the Bristol Children's Hospital. You may have seen the Children's Hospital as you arrived in Bristol – it's just down the road and is the building with the big, coloured lolly pops outside and our office is based just across the road.



I work for Wallace and Gromit's Grand Appeal with is the Bristol Children's Hospital charity. We support the hospital just down the road and also the special-care baby unit situated at St Michael's Hospital which is just up the hill from the Children's Hospital.

Bristol Children's Hospital is a very special place. It treats over 100,000 a year from all over the region – from the tip of Cornwall and into South Wales – the biggest catchment area of any of the other Children's Hospitals in the UK. Not only does it treat children from the south west, it also treats children from across Europe and the rest of the world due to the specialist treatment that is offered at the hospital. It is a referral centre and also a Centre of Excellence for treatments for cardiac patients, renal care and is also a major trauma centre. The role of the Grand Appeal is that we don't fund anything that the NHS should fund. We only fund the state-of-the-art pieces of

equipment – the big MRI scanners and cardiac hybrid – all the pieces of kit that if it was down to the NHS to fund, would take years and years to afford. We also fund all the arts enhancements, the music therapy, the play therapy and all the enhancements for the hospital and for the children which make it a little bit better for them when they are admitted – all the books, the games, the TVs, the Xboxes and iPads. We also fund the play therapists that go in and play with the children and help them when they're having their treatment. If you ever go into the Children's Hospital you'll notice that all the art work is at a low level so that when the children go in they can see it and there are loads of other adjustments for the children to make it a welcoming environment and to make it a little bit nicer for them rather than being like a stale, adult hospital it's a bit more vibrant.

Why *Gromit Unleashed*? Why were we raising money? In 2012 we were tasked with raising £3.5million which is a huge amount for a charity our size. At the time there were seven of us working there and it's no mean feat for any charity to raise this amount of money but particularly for us because we're fairly small. We had to raise £3.5million was because there's another hospital in Bristol called Frenchay Hospital and it had the other paediatric services located there. It was decided that the services at Frenchay would move over to the Children's Hospital and that they'd all be situated under one roof making it a Centre of Excellence – which it already was but to add everything under one roof it made it even better. So, for a child that had maybe been in a car accident and needed brain surgery, initially they would have to go to the Intensive Care unit just over the road and then to Frenchay for brain surgery and then come back to the Intensive Care unit here. That's not ideal and is high risk moving children around when they are that poorly. So we were tasked with raising £3.5million alongside the £30million that the NHS were going to put in to move the hospital over here. The £3.5million was to go towards some pieces of state-of-the-art kit – a hybrid cardiac theatre and also an MRI scanner which means that the surgeons can scan and operate on a child at the same time and which reduces the need for anaesthetising patients and therefore reduces the risk for the children.

Why we're raising money – story: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mN4HmqyytmE#t=28>  
We worked with Icon Films who are one of our supporters based just down the road in Bristol to put this film together and we were thrilled with the result and it really told the story that we wanted to tell and helped us with *Gromit Unleashed* when we were asking people to donate and telling them why we were doing what we were doing.

## **Aardman Animations**

We are very lucky to be able to use the Aardman Animations characters; Wallace and Gromit. Aardman and Nick Park, Pete Lord and Dave Sproxton have been huge supporters of the appeal since it was first set up in 1995. The appeal was first set up then to fundraise £11million for the rebuild of the hospital just down the road and at the time my colleagues went to see Nick, Pete and Dave and asked them if they would be willing to design a character for the appeal that we could use to spearhead our fundraising. They said that they could do better than that and that as Wallace and Gromit were on a bit of a holiday – during the time when *Chicken Run* was being filmed – they weren't doing a great deal and they said would we like to use them for the campaign and for the charity. As fellow marketers you know that you can't really pay for that and we were thrilled and since then we've worked in partnership with Aardman and in total have raised £28million since 1995.



## ***Gromit Unleashed***

We had a huge amount of money to raise and we wanted to do something a bit different and to put our mark out there and to tell Bristol, the South West and beyond what we were doing. It was a huge amount of money for us to raise in such a short amount of time – 18 months. So, we knew that we had to do something fairly big to tell people it and to reach the target so that when the expansion happened we could fund the parts we needed to fund. You've probably seen some of the other art trails that have taken place throughout the country – we've had gorillas here in Bristol, I think there have been gorillas in Norwich and rhinos in Southampton and dragons in Newport etc. We had the idea of potentially using Gromit so we went to Nick and asked how he would feel about five-foot tall Gromits popping up all over Bristol.

He was really keen and so the project started. It was 18 months in planning to get to this point (image right) which was the launch day of *Gromit Unleashed*. This was when Nick drove a steam train down to the Mshed museum with carriages filled with some of the 80 Gromits. We invited our supporters to come and see the Gromits for the first time – hundreds of people turned up and it was then that we thought this had the potential to be huge.



## How did we fund it?

It's all very well having the idea but you need the money / capital to put behind it. We decided that we would do this through sponsorship of the Gromits and before we launched the project for sponsors we went to our friends and supporters and companies that we'd worked with over the years to see if they'd be interested in sponsoring a Gromit. Luckily, 18 of them said that they would so when we launched the



project to the sponsors and the Bristol business world we had 18 of them on board and that was in the November 2012. Our original aim was to have 50 Gromits all over Bristol but the demand was so huge that we increased this to 80. By the time we closed for sponsorship in May 2013 we had 80 people on board and a waiting list. At that point we decided that we couldn't cope with any more!

## Artists

We put a call out to the artistic community across the region and the country and we had designs submitted from all over Europe and the world. We had 500 submissions in total that we had to whittle down. Meanwhile, while local artists were submitting their designs, Nick Park wrote to some of his friends and associates and people he had met over the years.



We hoped that we would get one or two people on board. We knew that Nick Park and Pete Lord would definitely do one each so we were off to a head start but in total we had 31 high-profile artists, celebrities and comedians taking part. There's Joanna Lumley (top left) with *Poetry in Motion* that she decorated herself in her large conservatory, Jools Holland (bottom left) did a musical Gromit in collaboration with an artist, Harry Hill (bottom right) decorated his Gromit as a bald Gromit, Aardman's friends at Disney Pixar did Gromit Lightyear and, for the younger girls,

Zayn Mallick (One Direction) got on board which was a huge coup for us. There were 31 high-profile artists in total.

### **Community and fundraising**

The whole point of the project really was to raise money at the auction at the end which would come in the September. But along the way there was huge potential for the community and for fundraising. We knew people would get involved but we didn't anticipate how the community of Bristol and the South West would get on board with this. We had sponsored Morris Dancing around the



Gromits, we had Gromitathons with people seeing as many of the Gromits as they could in a certain amount of time, half-Gromitathons, people cycling all around the Gromits. It was interesting because people used social media to meet up with a common interest – we had a group of Border Terrier dog owners who all chose to meet up and do a sponsored dog walk all around the Gromits with their dogs. We had three proposals of marriage and two weddings take place that were centred around the Gromits.

### **Detect-O-Gromit App**

We also launched an App on the first day of the trail which was a way to 'tick off' all the Gromits as you went around. As you saw more it unleashed new content which otherwise you couldn't have viewed if you hadn't bought the App including some 'making of' films. In the first day we had 4,500 downloads and 45,000 in total – each costing 69p and we reached

number one in the 'paid app' chart for Apple which was pretty big news for us. Alongside the App we also had some paper maps which you could use to go around and tick off all the Gromits. We also had a 'passport' where we had six designated passport stops which were where people could go to get a stamp if they visited that particular Gromit.

### **The power of social media**

We used social media a lot on this project – probably more than we'd used social media before. When we announced that Zayn Malik had been one of the people who had designed a Gromit, not



**45,000 downloads in total**

only did it crash our website but it crashed the server and crashed all the other users of the server. Zayn and One Direction re-tweeted the Tweet and it had a combined reach of over 30million people on Twitter.

### The Greatest Dog Show on Earth

After ten weeks of ‘Gromit-eering’, ‘Gromit-athons’, and all manner of Gromit-related activities we held the Greatest Dog Show on Earth which was a showcase of all the Gromits together in one place. We used the old ‘Habitat’ building and, by this time, after the summer, we knew that it would be popular but probably half way through the trail we thought that it might have the

potential to be quite big. It was. We had 25,000 over the course of what was originally going to be a long weekend, but we had to keep extending the opening times to allow for all the people to get in. Some people queued for eight hours and I remember, on the Saturday when I arrived at the exhibition at 8am, we had to close the queue by half-past eight because it was already seven hours in total, looping around the building and back on itself.

The Gromits were all inside and they were all divided into categories such as ‘Best in Show’, ‘Toy Dog’ and other, different dog breed, categories.

The auction in October was really what it was all about for us. It had been eighteen months in the planning and for any event, you hope at the end in fundraising, that you make the money and it makes it worth it for the amount of

investment. It was a nerve-wracking day and we were all slightly worried but when the first Gromit, ‘Patch’, went for £36,000 we knew we were in for a good night and we raised a total of over £2.3million.

It was a hugely successful event for us and we did some evaluation after the dust had settled. We did surveys with people who had attended the exhibition and also with people who had come to Bristol for the summer and we estimate that 1.2million people took part in the trail with a national PR reach of over 1billion while contributing £123 million to the Bristol economy.



## Merchandise

Alongside the trail we also sold merchandise – not just pens, pencils and merchandise but also a line of figurines. Jack (far right) was probably one of the most popular Gromits on the trail. I keep saying it



But, we didn't really see this coming but the figurines have been hugely successful and popular and we've now got 23 in production with a waiting list. Every time we release a new design we have people queueing outside the shop from three or four o'clock in the morning. The appeal of Gromit and tapping into the fact that people like collecting makes it a new income stream for us and one that we hadn't really considered before the project and continues now. We had a shop during the 10-week trail that was based at The Mall, Cribbs Causeway – the biggest shopping centre in the South West – and is the only charity initiative within The Mall. It was originally planned that it would be open for 10 weeks but we've now just celebrated our first-year anniversary and we're looking on to Christmas with new stock and new figurines.

## Key learnings from *Gromit Unleashed*

### 1. Create a compelling case

You know that the most powerful tool you have is your storytelling. *Why* are you doing this? *What* is this project about? For us, it was all about the Children's Hospital. It was all about raising the money for the Children's Hospital and the Auction at the end as well as throughout the project. So, we went to Icon and asked them to work with us on the film you saw earlier and by using the film we aimed at major donors first and



then throughout the project we changed our marketing materials for the different audiences we were aiming at both on our website and at the general public and also for our sponsors. It's always very important to remember *why* you are doing it and use *why* you are doing it to *sell* the project.



## 2. Build the commercial strategy

For us it was always about how we were going to fund the project and, as I mentioned earlier, we got sponsors on board. The sponsorship for each Gromit paid for, not only the fibreglass model of that Gromit, but also the artists to paint the Gromit but all the associated lacquering costs, the transportation, the signage and also, the money went towards



paying for the exhibition and the auction at the end. You need to work out how you are going to run this project and pay for it. It might not be through sponsorship, it might be through Lottery funding, trust funding, individual donors etc. But, for us, we knew that we were going to use the founding sponsors and the sponsors to fund it and we used the film that Icon put together to really sell in the reason that we're doing it and to get sponsors on board.



## 3. Pull in favours

We appreciate that we are very lucky with our support from Aardman and not everyone is in that situation but, we were able to ask Nick Park, Pete and Dave to talk to their friends and get people on board. We also have a really supportive fundraising base within Bristol and the South West from people



who have had experience of the Children's Hospital and know what it is all about. It's really important to see where you can go with this and often, as a charity or a not-for-profit organisation in the non-profit sector that people will be willing to give you discounts and also maybe help you out in return for a sponsorship and that sort of thing so pull in favours where you can.



## 4. Build a robust communications strategy

We had a complicated communications strategy in place for the whole of the project. Communications is really key for us because we have so many different messages to consider. First there was the brand – the brand of Gromit – what would Gromit do in this situation? Always thinking about Gromit and his character. We also had to work with Aardman really closely for the messaging for the



Charity. Always getting in the fact that it was a charity project and making sure that was key in any communications that we did. We also had partners and sponsors such as VisitEngland on board and we had to make sure that we were appropriately recognising them. We always made sure that we tailored our press releases for, not just local press, but also for national and international press.

**5. Be ambitious and build excitement**

We were always fairly ambitious but it is hard when you are a small team but when we launched this project, just with Nick Park and 10, blank white, ghost Gromits, people really got behind us, they got on board with the project, they got behind the hospital and we used our comms strategy so that every month from November 2012 we released a different artist. We



had sneak peaks at the Gromits that were coming so that by the time we launched the trail, people were really keen to see what they'd been hearing about for the last six or so months.

**6. Harness the power of communication**

We've talked a lot already about building a case and how important that is and communication and also the power of social media. But, for us, social media focused really heavily in this project and we used it more than we'd ever used social media as a charity before. It allowed us to react quickly to



events that were happening so, when unfortunately, a couple of the Gromits were vandalised on the first few days of the trail we were able to tell people that they'd just been removed from the trail to go to the vets and would be back on show soon. We also moved some of the Gromits for the Harbour Festival for their own safekeeping because the Festival can get very busy. We moved them just down the road to Aardman and were able to tell everyone

through social media that we were doing that Throughout the exhibition when the queues were long we were able to Tweet how long the queue was and people could decide if they really wanted to queue up for that amount of time. We were also able to promote fundraising so if there was a fundraising event taking place we were able to tell people about it in case they wanted to go down and see what was going on.





## 7. Strong call to action in marketing materials

This was always at the fore front of what we were doing – that this is a Charity project, this is for the Children’s Hospital, this is helping sick children from across the UK and beyond. We always made sure, whether it was digital marketing, online marketing, marketing materials and packaging for our products we always had a call to action and it always said that it was about the Children’s Hospital. We also created some ‘making of’ films with some of the more ‘VIP’ artists. Here’s the *Making of Gromit Lightyear*: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WV3xv3kRQMY> with a special message from John Lasseter and his team at Pixar Animation Studios.

### Find quirky press angles

You all know that the press won’t come along to take a photo of a giant cheque being handed over outside the Children’s Hospital. They like a quirky angle, something new, something different or something just a bit fun. Throughout the project we staged press calls where we did interesting things with Gromits. As you saw earlier we put ten or so Gromits on the train and had Nick Park drive the train and we also put a Gromit on one of the Bristol Ferry Boats and we winched Gromberry (the strawberry Gromit) up on a crane outside Mshed. This was ambitious and we were very nervous when he started swinging about.



It had the impact we wanted and was picked up by the press. We also used a model of Feather McGraw, the evil penguin character from the Aardman film *The Wrong Trousers*, throughout the trail to pop up in various places and give clues to where he might be next. That added another Aardman spin to the trail and people seemed to enjoy that. We also placed him in the jewellery counter at John Lewis which is quite apt as in the films he’s a jewellery thief.



### Celebrate and thank everyone involved

This is a given but people have invested in this project, they’ve given a lot of money and time – not only your sponsors but people who volunteered and donated. Always say thank you – it’s really important and also means that hopefully people will remember and they’ll help you in the future.

## Evaluate

We knew during the trail how successful it had proved and we used a survey from people who had attended the *Greatest Dog Show on Earth* and asked people interacting with us online to do a survey and we did a sponsor survey. We used the results to see the impact and also to learn from it. The learnings that we have we will take forward for our *Shaun the Sheep* project. We also used it to produce our evaluation which also shows the economic impact and this has been used by some universities and organisations to highlight successful tourism projects and also for dissertation subjects.



### **Gromit Unleashed Hong Kong**

We used the learning from Gromit Unleashed to move the project to Hong Kong. It launched this week (w/c 21<sup>st</sup> July 2014) and will last throughout July and August with an auction in September. It is at the ELEMENTS shopping mall in Hong Kong which is one of the leading, high-end shopping malls in the country and is entitled



*The Greatest Dog Show on Earth in Asia.* After *Gromit Unleashed* we had a number of different cities from Britain approaching us and we also had approaches from throughout Europe, South America, America and Australia for people wanting to take the model and use it in their cities. The reason we chose Hong Kong was that the ELEMENTS shopping mall came to us with a fully-formed plan of how they would execute the exhibition in the shopping centre and also, how they would fund it. Gromit Unleashed and The Greatest Dog Show on Earth are trademarked brands and all the designs from the UK trail are all copyrighted by The Grand Appeal and Aardman. We've provided the ELEMENTS shopping centre with a license to re-produce the project and everything that they do has to be signed off by The Grand Appeal and also by Aardman Animations.

## Communications

They've been using a number of methods to promote the project. It's been an interesting journey to develop a communications plan in two different languages with different elements to think about that we didn't have to think about for *Gromit Unleashed* in Bristol. Through their license the team in Hong Kong have been able to create marketing materials and it has all been approved by us and they've built an

official *Gromit Unleashed* website and a campaign through social media. We've also used our fan base from the project here to promote the project and we have been announcing it to our supporters who came from further afield than the UK to tell them about our project.



## Marketing

The team have worked with Aardman and built up a different strategy. They've produced a satellite website and targeted different groups of people.

They've targeted children, adults and Wallace and Gromit fans to try to get these three different audiences to come to the shopping centre which they may not already do.

They did quite a lot of long-lead press work before the launch. They invested heavily in press and they flew over a 9 year-old child prodigy artist from Australia and she designed a Gromit which is now on display. Her artwork sells for huge sums of money and they did some press work around her. They also invited over Merlin Crossingham, Creative Director for Wallace and Gromit, to do a lot of press work and workshops around the project to really encourage people to come along. Online they've created a satellite website which is similar to the *Gromit Unleashed* site that we had last year containing details of all the different Gromits and the different artists and information about their designs. We've also cross-promoted using our website and our Facebook and Twitter channels so everything is linking up.

For the launch they managed to keep a couple of things secret. One of which was this four foot tall Gromit at the centre of the shopping mall. He has been designed by Gavin Strange, Senior Designer for Aardman, who also designed one of the Bristol Gromits and has a design in our shop. There are some special graphics under Gromit's tummy that you will only know about if you go over there. I



haven't been so I don't know what they are! They also have designed a two-tier carousel of Gromits which was something we hadn't seen before (left) and we were a bit worried about how it would work but it seems to be fine. So, they kept a few things quiet ready for the launch to really make an impact.

This isn't just a marketing exercise for the ELEMENTS shopping mall but is similar to *Gromit Unleashed* whereby the auction comes in September and all the money goes again to the Grand Appeal but also Art in Hospital which is a Hong Kong charity. The Making of *Gromit Unleashed* in Hong Kong video: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0U8\\_99uSSK8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0U8_99uSSK8)

### Next project

While Gromit is in Hong Kong we're going to start working with Shaun the Sheep – 2015 is the Chinese Year of the Sheep and Shaun also has a feature film which will be released in cinemas in the spring. Shaun is also the mascot for the Rugby World Cup so it's a huge year for the sheep next year and we thought we should get on board. We are currently in the early planning stages of a project that will feature Shaun similar to Gromit across Bristol and also London. It ties in nicely as well because next year is Green Capital Year in Bristol. It's going to be a very big year for Bristol! Here's a teaser for the Shaun the Sheep movie coming in 2015

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xnUKQww9IPM>

### Questions

**Tim Wood (AMA deputy Chair):** I've got a question to kick us off. From the early stages of planning this you couldn't have anticipated just how big and successful this was going to be – when that started to happen – and obviously what it's all geared towards is raising money – did you have to raise your expectations for the money you were raising, how do you keep those

expectations realistic when you've been receiving all that interest – how do you anticipate realistically what that's going to mean in terms of all the money that you can raise?

**Anna Shepherd:** We were tasked with raising a large amount of money in a short space of time and we obviously had plans about how we would raise that money. When it became very clear how successful this could be it was a roller coaster of emotions and we kept thinking that we were either going to raise lots of money or it was all going to fall flat. Especially on the night of the auction when we thought that the Gromits might only fetch £1000 each because we had been through this massive escalation of popularity of this event. As an organisation we've been established for 20 years and we have numerous activities that we do to raise money. We had plans in place about how we would raise this money of which, this one needed to raise a lot of money. What happened along the way is that some things got side lined mainly because we are a small team, all of us were working 24/7 seven days a week for 10 weeks. It became very clear that other things had to be put to one side. We had to wait to see what happened – what was the auction going to raise? We had an idea that we never said out loud because we panicked that we wouldn't raise it. It obviously raised far more than we thought it would and that was a good thing because it meant that all of the things we side lined, we didn't then have to do. Gromit Unleashed was eventually evaluated at raising £3.8million. Our initial target was to raise £3.5million but our overall appeal is actually for £5million which we do need to raise by March 2015.

**Delegate:** Is the relationship with the shopping centre in Hong Kong complicated? How difficult was it to negotiate the split in fundraising?

**Anna:** They approached to replicate the event. They actually approached us in January and said that they wanted to put it in in July – we said 'go for it' knowing that it had taken us 18 months to pull the project together. With it being overseas, and as you say, they wanted to raise money for children's charities locally so we have entered into a license agreement with them. Rather than it being an event that we have put on, we have worked jointly with Aardman to agree a license fee – a percentage of the auction in return for us giving them the tools to then go and run this event themselves.

**Delegate:** Did you have to consider the ethics around who you might partner with? Did you have anything in place as a guideline as to who you might partner with?

**Anna:** The one factor was that it had to support a children's charity to continue the ethos of the event.

**Delegate:** Do you have any tips for organisations that are fundraising for causes that are a little less appealing? We're about to start fundraising for a new building – you talk about the children at the hospital – we don't have such an appealing subject to talk about.

**Anna:** That's a question that we get asked all of the time. Of course, we have a cause that is emotive – everybody knows a child – a lot of the time they know someone who has had a child in hospital etc. and it is obviously a cause that is very appealing. However, the flip side of that is that people say 'it's easy for you to raise money for children' and I get that but we have now been raising money for 20 years and we have had to reinvent ourselves time and time again because our problem is people saying 'now what do you want money for'? This is ongoing – raising money for the Children's Hospital will never stop. There will always be a need and our job is to ensure, as Helen has mentioned in the presentation, is that we are engaging our audience to want to continue to give. I think, what this did for us in that we were involved on a small level with the previous gorilla trail, we saw what the gorillas did and that surpassed our expectations. They had anticipated that each gorilla would auction for about £1,500 / £2,000 yet the cheapest went for £7k and the highest amount paid was £26,000. That was raising money for the zoo – not necessarily a cause that everybody wants to support so I think it's about engaging them in supporting something they don't realise they're supporting, almost because they want to get involved in the project. This, for Bristol, went bonkers. Everyone was doing the trail, everyone was talking about it, you couldn't go anywhere without doing it and what was really interesting was the number of people that didn't necessarily know that it was for the Children's Hospital – that bit had sort of passed them by. They just wanted to see the Gromits and come to get involved and have a great time. Yes, there always has to be that cause but it's about finding what it is that's going to appeal to the mass but also giving them something to get involved in, that they'll want to do anyway and the great thing is that it is also for charity.

**Delegate:** What a fantastic project! But what went wrong? Was there anything that you could learn from?

**Anna:** Expectation maybe. But that's one of the ones that you can't always know what the anticipation is going to be. It was the expectations of the people on the trail that we had to manage the most. Social media – although a great tool was also our worst nightmare. It was where people could express their complaints about something like a Gromit being located somewhere that's not open on a Monday etc. It was about thinking through all of those aspects about the people that are going to do the trail – just managing the expectations of the general public. We're a small charity that's been around Bristol for a long time however, we probably hadn't worked on a project that is

so public and has so many public involved in it and I think that's where we hadn't tasked ourselves with the right tools to enable ourselves to react to those responses during the trail. I think that when we do it again we can manage that – simple things like getting better Q&As on our website, to be able to answer those questions that came time and time again.

**Helen:** Just to add to that and touch briefly on a few things that we had to manage on the ground at the time. At the start of the trail we knew it could be big and we booked an exhibition venue accordingly but during the trail we realised that the interest from the public who wanted to come to the exhibition at the end and see all the Gromits was building and building so we had to take the decision to move the venue for the exhibition and that was not without problems as you can imagine. Three or four weeks before the exhibition was due to happen – to find a different venue was really stressful but ultimately it worked in our favour because otherwise the backlash from the public would have been huge as we even then had people happily queueing for eight hours to see them but we had to respond to what was happening and I think that was the whole point – we didn't know how big the project would be, we thought it would be fairly big because everyone loves Gromit and we'd seen the reaction of people to the gorillas and how many people came to see those but we really did have to think on our feet when things looked like they could go wrong or be ready to react to the public. It did really become the public's event and then when it launched on the 1<sup>st</sup> of July it had been our baby for over a year and we found it quite hard to let go. As soon as those Gromits were out on the street – we hadn't even finished installing them and two were vandalised – it was really hard, our hearts sank as we thought we were putting the art work out there for ten weeks and what would we have left to auction. We reacted to what happened and when problems came, which they invariably did, we worked towards it and managed it and overcame them. I think that was one of our strong points – reacting well to what happened. You can't predict what might happen – as soon as an event goes out there and the public are involved they take ownership of it which is fantastic and what we wanted to happen but we couldn't have anticipated some of the things that would happen that we worked together to overcome. It was about turning any weaknesses of the project into a strength in that we managed to overcome them. With the exhibition, although there were queues for eight hours it did build up an anticipation and excitement for the auction which is what we wanted all along so although it probably wasn't intentional and we would have chosen not to be so stressed about the exhibition two weeks before it happened it did then help the auction at the end.

**Delegate:** A quick question about capacity. The project obviously took off and was perhaps bigger than you thought – did you have to grow your team at all? Or certain elements of it? How did you manage that? Has it shrunk back again or will it grow?

**Anna:** We had already grown the team very slightly as we had entered in the capital appeal – growing to eight, then shrinking back to four people as we continued with a revenue appeal since 2001 and then about three years ago we grew it again to six people and our team is now eleven. That's fundraisers and administrative staff and then we also have our retail staff out at The Mall who will stay there as long as the shop remains open. We grew to accommodate the Capital Appeal but not necessarily to accommodate Gromit Unleashed but what we haven't done is shrunk back down again. We've remained at that capacity as this continues to grow and go from strength to strength.

**Delegate:** Obviously the project has a legacy and next year there are lots of fantastic things planned but in terms of your donors, what are you doing to hold onto your donors who supported *Gromit Unleashed* – are you waiting until next year or are you engaging them in other elements of the organisation?

**Anna:** We're very fortunate to have long-established donors who were with us before Gromit Unleashed. We've engaged new ones which, as a charity, is always what we want to do. We continue to look after our donors in the same way – we send regular updates about *Gromit Unleashed* but also about the charity and what we're doing and what our plans are etc. What *Gromit Unleashed* brought are probably two different types of supporters – those that are mad about Gromit – who just want to know about the figurines and buy another one and those that are interested more in the cause and love doing this anyway. What was really interesting was the number of past donors who had maybe gone a bit quiet but have now come back and carried on with us. We are using the normal channels to continue to update our donors with what we're doing and what the money is being spent on etc. We have quite a history and it's about sustaining and keeping those supporters on board. They'll always tip off now and again but then come back up. But like I said, donors who supported us fifteen years ago, came back on board when Gromit Unleashed struck up.

**Delegate:** I was wondering what options were available for individuals to make donations throughout the campaign – individuals who maybe didn't want to sponsor a Gromit or take part in the auction but still wanted to contribute towards the campaign. Were there different communications strategies in place to engage with those individuals and opportunities to donate?

**Anna:** We communicated the event on our normal communications – website, newsletter etc. telling people how they could get involved in that way. A couple of simple ways that other people could get involved was via the App because we received the profits from the app and there were smaller items of merchandise – all profits to the charity. Lots of people got involved in doing sponsored events etc. and what was great with some of the sponsors was that they got their staff involved on an individual level and that just seemed to spill out. There were the normal channels of people getting involved on an individual basis through the charity as they would normally but this was something for them to peg it on. If they were planning to do something then they could just do it through *the Gromit Unleashed* trail or through the merchandise or simply general fundraising. One big thing that escalated for us was our Charity of the Year – a large percentage of our sponsors then chose our charity as their Charity of the Year which was fantastic for us.

**Delegate:** You've obviously invested a lot in the project, what the Return on Investment ratio?

**Anna:** To run *Gromit Unleashed* as an event, the sponsorship that we obtained for each Gromit covered all of the costs associated to the sculptures, getting them on the streets, the production of the marketing materials, the exhibition and the auction. So, the only other cost that probably wasn't incorporated in that but would be in our normal fundraising strategy is staff time. We worked hard to ensure that every penny spent on the event itself was covered by sponsorship so we could happily say that every penny raised at the auction has gone straight into the charity.