



Disney and Make-A-Wish® UK Create a Magical Disney Experience for UK Wish Children

News release for immediate use: The Walt Disney Company UK & Ireland and Make-A-Wish® UK have once again come together to create a magical Disney Wish experience for children living with serious illness.

Hosted at Hoar Cross Hall, over 200 families living with life-limiting or life-threatening illnesses have been invited down to embark on a special three-day immersive Disney experience at the Staffordshire hotel, which has been transformed into an enchanted manor over 11 days (5th – 15th June).

With many of the Make-A-Wish® families unable to travel abroad due to their circumstances, the Disney Wish experience provides an opportunity for families to take part in unforgettable events with their favourite Disney stories and characters.

Now in its fourth year, A Disney Wish is an example of the experiences created by Disney's 40-year partnership with Make-A-Wish, which has helped grant over 155,000 wishes globally.

Throughout their stay, the families can enjoy five Disney shows specifically written for this event, 11 different Disney-themed family activities, including Storytime with Disney Princesses, exploring Winnie the Pooh's Treasure Trail and a special celebration to mark Donald Duck's 90th Anniversary. With over 35 beloved Disney characters waiting to greet the families, there will be lots of fun surprises throughout the guests' stay, and, to add to the excitement, a week before the families arrived, they received a special letter from Mickey Mouse himself.

One of the children attending A Disney Wish is Barney Gardner, 14, from Ashton under Hill. Barney had a life expectancy of two years and continues to defy the odds.

Barney's mum, Beverley Gardner, said: *"These children are so resilient and deal with so much on a day-to-day basis. They often can't do things that others take for granted. A Disney Wish is such a unique and special opportunity that he wouldn't be able to experience if it weren't for Make-A-Wish. The wish has been so tailored to Barney, giving him the right environment to maximise his enjoyment. These children are special gifts - they're precious and deserve such a special wish."*

"For many of us, our children will live a short life, and there will be extremely difficult times ahead. But because of Make-A-Wish and Disney we can create lasting memories, immerse ourselves in this experience, and forget about everything else as we live in the present moment."

Deborah Armstrong, Senior Vice President and Country Manager, Disney UK & Ireland, said: *"Creating moments that matter for children and their families is at the very core of our social purpose. We know the happiness, joy and magic our much-loved characters, stories, films and experiences bring to children and families, so it's our privilege to once again work with Make-A-Wish and see the joy and*



positive impact these very special Disney wish experiences have on children and their families when they need it the most.”

Make-A-Wish UK® Chief Executive, Jason Suckley, said: *“The number of children turning to us for a wish with less than a year to live has trebled since the pandemic. The heartbreaking reality is that many families simply can’t wait for their wish to be granted. Disney continues to be one of the most popular wish requests, but often families are not able to travel due to their medical condition or treatment plan. Every child deserves to wish for more than a life defined by illness and we’re absolutely delighted that critically ill children and their families can experience the magic of Disney right here in the UK and create lasting memories they will treasure forever, no matter what the future holds. We are extremely grateful to Disney for making this event possible – their support really does mean everything to the children and families who turn to us.”*

Partners involved in the event include: Hoar Cross Hall, Amazon, Baker Ross, Claire’s, Close Brothers, Coolmed, Culligan, Disneyland Destinations International, Disguise, Disneyland Paris, Get Ready Comics, Iwish, JAKKS, JL Live, Jumbulance, LoungeFly, Mattel, P&G, Photobox, Poundland, Print Room, Rhino Sensory, Rubbys, Smiffys, Stargazing Mickey, Surescreen, Uber Eats.

– ENDS –

For further information, please contact:

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Notes To Editors

- We do not use the phrase ‘terminally ill’ and ask that you follow suit because some poorly children and young people are not made aware of the exact nature of their diagnosis and we respect their family’s approach to their situation. Some also recover fully from their illness.
- Please refer to us as Make-A-Wish® UK in the first instance to distinguish us from affiliates in other countries and hyperlink to our website when you mention the charity online: www.make-a-wish.org.uk
- Please and hyperlink to the relevant websites when you mention the two-way partnership online:
 - www.make-a-wish.org.uk
 - www.disney.co.uk

About Disney Responsible Business

At The Walt Disney Company, we are committed to delivering joy, comfort and strength to children and young people, when it’s needed the most, such as in serious illness, trauma or social isolation. The



partnership with **Make-A-Wish** is an example of how, by working together, we can create moments of bonding and togetherness, which are critical to help build emotional resilience. Through our unparalleled storytelling, we can inspire and create positive feelings, experiences and memories, giving children, young people and those closest to them, the strength and ability to cope. Since 1980, Disney has helped Make-A-Wish® grant more than 155,000 life-changing wishes around the world – bringing hope, strength and joy to wish children and their families.

Since 2019, Disney has created over 310,000 life-changing moments across Europe – bringing hope, strength and joy to wish children and their families. For more information on our programmes and our long-standing charitable partnerships visit www.thewaltdisneycompany.eu

About Make-A-Wish UK

Make-A-Wish UK is part of a global movement creating life-changing wishes. Our only goal is to turn tears into cheers by giving children facing critical illness the chance to dream big even when they might not have long to live. No matter what the future holds, we create lasting memories families will treasure forever.

Make-A-Wish® is a registered charity and receives no Government funding. Registered charity numbers: 295672 in England and Wales, SC037479 in Scotland.

To find out more about how wishes can help, visit make-a-wish.org.uk or follow the charity on social media: Twitter ([@makeawishuk](https://twitter.com/makeawishuk)), Instagram ([makeawishuk](https://www.instagram.com/makeawishuk)) and TikTok ([@makeawishuk](https://www.tiktok.com/@makeawishuk)).

About Hoar Cross Hall Spa Hotel

Barons Eden is a growing group of award-winning countryside Spa and Hotel retreats, designed for relaxing, reconnecting and indulging. Owned by six like-minded partners who all share a passion for creating unforgettable Spa experiences, the team's primary focus is to provide individuality, flare and operational excellence to each destination.

Hoar Cross Hall Spa Hotel is a historic Spa retreat nestled within rural Staffordshire. With 185,000 square feet to explore, guests can experience pamper days, weekend trips and countryside staycations, whilst also being able to exclusively hire the property for corporate events and personal milestone occasions.

Eden Hall Day Spa is an award-winning day Spa set in the heart of Nottinghamshire. Spanning 113,000 square feet, spa-goers can enjoy luxury treatments, state-of-the-art facilities and the sprawling outdoor Spa Garden.



Hoar Cross Hall Spa Hotel is proud to be hosting A Disney Wish, offering our support in creating a magical experience for children living with serious illness.

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