



Our Impact

Variety, the Children's Charity
Impact Report 2023



Welcome to Variety, the Children's Charity's 2023 Impact Report



As we look back on 2023, we are proud to see a year of growth for Variety. With the cost-of-living crisis hitting families hard, disabled and disadvantaged children need our help now more than ever.

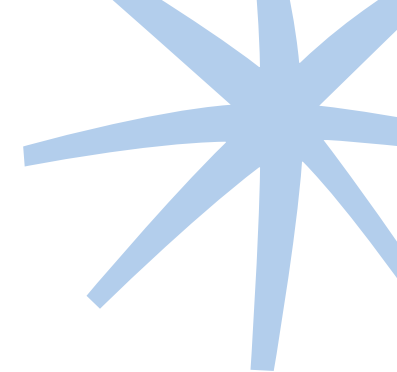
Our commitment to helping these children remains strong, and we continue to work towards bettering the lives of children throughout the UK.

In the last year, 350,000 more children were pulled into poverty in the UK. That's 4.3 million children in total living in poverty throughout the country.

This impact report is testament to the dedication of our staff, volunteers, and supporters. As the charity continues to grow, we have taken great strides in establishing and improving our programmes, making new connections, and reaching new audiences. Whether it is a Sunshine Coach, a Variety Great Day Out, a grant for a wheelchair or specialist equipment, we continue to improve the lives of disabled and disadvantaged children to help them reach their full potential.

Thanks to you, our brilliant supporters, we're confident that we can develop and grow our services in 2024 as we celebrate our 75th Anniversary. As we reflect on our rich history and look forward to the future, we remain committed to making sure children don't miss out on the experiences that should be part of every childhood.

Making a positive difference to disabled and disadvantaged children



We helped

160,399

Children and young people in 2023.



* 87,399 children and young children helped through Variety's programmes
73,000 children and young people helped through the Variety Children's Hospital.

At a glance

143

children benefited from wheelchairs and equipment

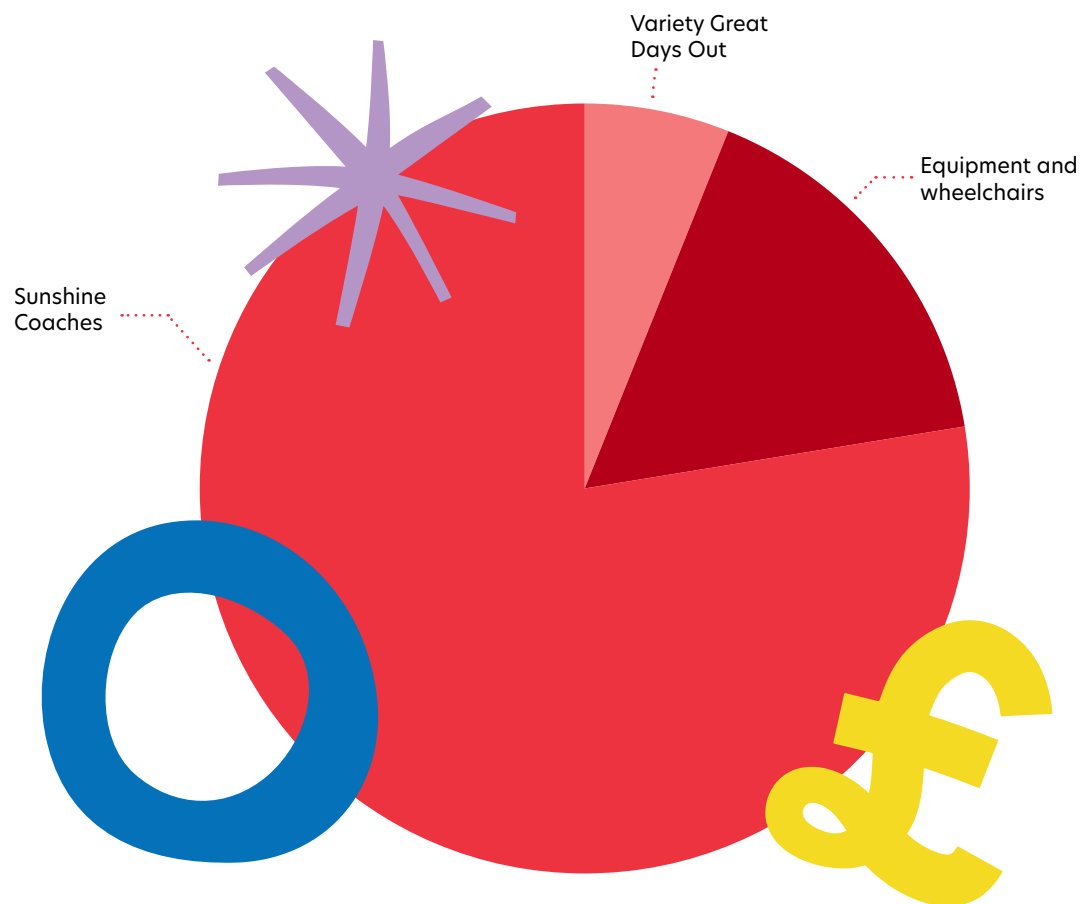
79,300

children were provided with Sunshine Coaches

7,956

children went on Variety Great Days Out

Total spend on programmes:



Total: £3,438,335

6% Variety Great Days Out **£206,232**

16% Equipment and wheelchairs **£563,352**

78% Sunshine Coaches **£2,668,751**

Where we worked in 2023

Variety, the Children's Charity supported children in 132 towns and cities across the UK.

We provided:

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Equipment for children in 65 towns and cities.

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Sunshine Coaches in 28 towns and cities.

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Variety Great Days Out in 24 towns and cities.

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Wheelchairs for children in 44 towns and cities.

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Equipment and wheelchairs for children in 109 towns and cities.



We supplied 90 equipment grants

Variety, the Children's Charity pays for assistive devices for children irrespective of disability, illness or cost.

Our equipment grants included funding for specialist beds and communication devices.



In 2023, Variety provided grants for:

21	pieces of sensory equipment	4	walkers and standing frames
15	miscellaneous items	3	hoists and harnesses
14	specialist beds and cots	2	scoliosis suits
9	specialist car seats	2	pieces of specialist furniture
6	pieces of outdoor play equipment	2	sensory rooms
5	seating systems	1	piece of sports and training equipment
5	pieces of bathroom equipment	1	piece of IT equipment

Equipment Grants

Aurora's Story

Aurora is a lively and sociable four-year-old girl who enjoys big sensory activities. Since receiving a new safety sleeper bed funded by Variety, the Children's Charity, Aurora and her family have enjoyed more peaceful nights.

Due to two severe perinatal strokes during pregnancy, Aurora has Quadriplegic Cerebral Palsy, meaning that each of her limbs are weakened. She is just learning to sit on her own, but she is unable to stand or walk, and she is non-verbal. That doesn't stop Aurora from making herself known!

Aurora's family came to Variety for help funding a safety sleeper bed.

The new bed with hospital settings has been a much-needed lifeline for the family, particularly as they have to constantly monitor Aurora for epileptic seizures.



Aurora's mum, Cressida, said:

In her baby cot, Aurora was getting her limbs stuck and hitting her head. I was trying to put bumpers and things round but that was moveable and difficult. That was a huge appeal of the bed because it has special padding, so it's a kind

of safe space to be able to put her. And we can use it for changing her as well because it's got hospital settings so it can go really high so I'm not having to bend down in a really difficult way with a slipped disc in my back.

I also felt really proud of myself for having got it. Just having something that I managed to sort with your help was just a really nice, positive, proud feeling that's quite hard to come by.

We funded 53 wheelchairs

Having the right wheelchair can make all the difference when it comes to being more independent, improving children's medical outcomes and boosting confidence.

We fill a need for wheelchairs when healthcare systems and local authority wheelchair services do not.



In 2023, Variety provided grants for:

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28 manual wheelchairs

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11 powered wheelchairs

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7 sports wheelchairs

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6 all-terrain wheelchairs

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1 standing wheelchair

Wheelchair Grants

Harry's story

10-year-old Harry is an active young boy with many hobbies, including attending the school robotics club, fencing, and sailing. Last year, he came second in sailing in the summer regatta.

Harry has a rare muscle condition called Titinopathy, a little-known condition that medical professionals are still learning about today. It often causes pain or tenderness, burning sensations in the muscles, difficulty moving joints, feeling crackling or grating when moving the joint, muscle weakness and loss of strength. It affects Harry's muscles throughout his body, meaning he cannot walk or stand.

Harry is a full-time powerchair user. He had nearly outgrown his old wheelchair and was in need of a chair that would enable him to go off-road and on the sand at the beach where the family lives. With his new powerchair, Harry is able to go on the beach and on boats, and can continue normal life with his family. Weighing just over a third of a standard powerchair, Harry's Trekinetic can easily go in and out of non-adapted cars and onto boats, which is a big part of their family life.



Harry's mum, Suzie, said:

Without this, we would possibly still be fundraising and saving money for the new chair, or I would have had to run another marathon!! Either way, we were able to purchase Harry the chair much quicker, and he is now a happy user of the chair. The chair is also much faster than his old (child) one, which means he is able to keep up with friends and peers, which is better for him socially too.

We put 38 Sunshine Coaches on the road



Variety Sunshine Coaches are fully accessible minibuses that cater for SEND schools and non-profit organisations working with disabled and disadvantaged children and young people.

Our coaches give youngsters the opportunity to explore places they would otherwise never visit, experience different learning environments and gain life skills outside of the classroom.

Sunshine Coaches per region delivered in 2023:

21 in Southern England

10 in Northern England

4 in the Midlands

2 in Scotland

1 in Northern Ireland

Sunshine Coaches

Briarwood Special School

Briarwood Special School caters to children and young people aged 3-19 with Severe and Profound Learning Difficulties, Complex Needs, Autism and Sensory Impairment. Three quarters of Briarwood's students communicate in ways that are not verbal, and more than half need specialist behaviour support, while a fifth are challenged by life limiting conditions. 47% of students live in the 10% most deprived communities in Bristol.

With five separate buildings across three locations in Bristol, Briarwood needed a Sunshine Coach to help transport students between their sites to give them access to the different facilities. With their new coach, students are able to visit the hydrotherapy pool based at the secondary school, the new immersive and interactive Gruffalo-themed library and soft play at the junior school, and other facilities across the different sites.

Nicolle Deighton, Executive Headteacher at Briarwood Special School, said:

“Having our own minibus enables us to enhance curriculum and enrichment opportunities for our pupils, particularly after the additional challenges of the last couple of years where the impact of Covid-19, combined with our pupils' multiple vulnerabilities, has severely limited opportunities for pupils to integrate within the community. Additionally, the complexity of our pupils' needs means they find it increasingly challenging to access transport facilities.

Access to a minibus enables us to make a wide range of off-site links with organisations,

employers, and work placements in support of our careers, employability and preparing for adulthood curriculum. The use of a Sunshine Coach ensures we can carefully plan fun trips for our pupils that reward and celebrate their achievements, also broadening their life experiences. This includes visits to the library, shops, parks, sport centres, zoos, animal therapy sessions, museums, open spaces and much more, creating meaningful links between curriculum/life skills learning and the application of this to everyday life outside of our school context.



We delivered 31 Variety Great Days Out in 2023

Variety Great Days Out create magical memories for children who may otherwise not have the opportunity to go on a special outing.

Whether a trip to the zoo, a day out at a theme park, or a visit to Santa's grotto, our Great Days Out help create those all important childhood memories. Each day out helps children broaden their horizons, build their confidence and social skills, and support their learning and development.



Variety Great Days Out by region in 2023:

11 in Southern England

11 in Northern England

6 in the Midlands

2 in Wales

1 in Scotland

Great Days Out

West Midlands Safari Park

6,000 children, along with their parents and carers, enjoyed the annual Variety Great Day Out at West Midland Safari Park.

The Great Day Out was organised by Variety Midlands member, Lillian Bishop. Variety, the Children's Charity provided 6,000 tickets, donated by West Midland Safari Park, to disabled and disadvantaged children to visit the park with their families and carers on a Variety Great Day Out. Over two weekends, families made the most of the opportunity to spend some quality time together.



One father, Neil, said:

“My son, Harrison, and I wanted to extend our deepest gratitude for the incredible experience you provided us with - the visit to West Midland Safari Park. It was an adventure of a lifetime, and we cannot thank Variety enough for making it possible.”

Variety's generosity not only allowed us to enjoy a day of adventure but also created lasting memories that we will treasure forever. It's heartwarming to know that there are organisations like Variety dedicated to bringing joy to children's lives.



We helped 73,000 children at the Variety Children's Hospital in 2023



The renowned King's College Hospital is home to the Variety Children's Hospital: our flagship healthcare project and one of the UK's leading medical centres for children.

Located in Cheyne Wing on King's College Hospital's main site in London, the Variety Children's Hospital has a dedicated critical care centre, a daycare unit, a busy outpatient department and four inpatient wards. It was designed with children and their carers in mind and every year it treats and cares for more than 70,000 children.

We forged new partnerships

In 2023, we were delighted to forge new partnerships and to continue to strengthen our relationship with our supporters. Whether we are partnering with corporates, schools, or other charities, we are thrilled to be able to reach new audiences and help even more disabled and disadvantaged children across the country.

In 2023, we partnered with:

31 corporate partners

3 media companies

21 trusts and foundations

2 schools

11 challenge events companies

1 law firm

8 charities and non-profit organisations

5 specialist services



KILLIK & Co



About us

In the UK, there are over 1.5 million disabled children and over four million children living in poverty. Our mission is to improve the lives of those children.

Since we were founded in 1949, we've raised over £200 million and supported more than 1.5 million children affected by ill health, disadvantage and disability across the UK. When statutory funding cannot adequately meet a child's needs, Variety steps in. We support children in four ways:

- **Education** - our grants encourage learning, develop skills and boost confidence and mental health
- **Mobility** - our wheelchair and equipment grants and our Sunshine Coaches give children access to places they couldn't otherwise access
- **Experiences** - our Great Days Out create important childhood memories with new and exciting experiences
- **Health** - our grants give children the tools they need to lead an active, healthy life, while our funding to the Variety Children's Hospital gives children access to the best possible medical care

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To get help:

If you or someone you know needs our help, visit:

variety.org.uk/help

To donate:

To make a donation visit:

variety.org.uk/donations

To fundraise:

To find out more about how you can fundraise for Variety visit:

variety.org.uk/getinvolved

Stay in touch:

Variety, the Children's Charity
Variety House, 93 Bayham Street,
London NW1 0AG

t: 020 7428 8100

e: info@variety.org.uk

@varietygb

@VarietyGB

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