



WAY Widowed & Young

WAY offers a peer-to-peer support network for anyone aged 50 or under who is overcoming the loss of a partner, married or not, with or without children, whatever their sexual orientation.

WAY (Widowed and Young) is the only national charity in the UK for men and women aged 50 or under when their partner died. It's a peer-to-peer support group run by a network of volunteers who have been bereaved at a young age themselves, so they understand exactly what other members are going through.

WAY's objectives are to advance the education of the public to raise the awareness of the needs of people who are widowed and young. WAY also aim to relieve persons in need, following bereavement by offering a peer-to-peer support network for anyone aged 50 or under, at time of bereavement, who is overcoming the loss of a partner, married or not, with or without children, whatever their sexual orientation.

WAY volunteers organise dozens of meet ups and holidays throughout the year ranging from walks in the Lake District, an annual Big Picnic held in 37 locations across the UK to a week long holiday in Italy. This Father's Day weekend, 55 members and children are attending an activity weekend in the heart of Derbyshire, with a further 60 members and children heading to Dorset for the weekend.

WAY has a local organiser in London who holds regular meets across the city, with five day and nights out planned in the upcoming weeks, kicking off with a Swing Class and social night, a chance to brush up on your Tuck Turn.

The Big Picnic on Sunday 21st May was held at Princess Diana Memorial Gardens was a great success for WAY, this attracted nearly 40 people, including current members of WAY and others interested in joining or wanting to know more about what WAY does and how our members can benefit.

WAY is truly a lifeline for our 2,500+ members, including keen Wimbledon AFC fan Sara Challinor. Here is her story:

"In May 2014 my much loved husband past away unexpectedly leaving myself and his then 12 year old daughter heartbroken. Our dreams of a future together destroyed.



David was born in Birkenhead (Tranmere, never Liverpool) but moved down to London when he started university in the early 80s. It was then that, always a fan of the underdog, he fell in love with Wimbledon. Although I was born in Wimbledon and was living there when they won the FA Cup in 1988 I'd never been to a game. It wasn't until the mid-90s after we met, that he took me to my first match at Crystal Palace and I too became hooked on the underdog. Now instead of my husband I go to every home game with my dad, both of us season ticket holders. It helps me feel close to my husband and I'll never forget that wonderful day at Wembley, two years to the day after my husband died when Wimbledon got promoted to League One. He would have cheered the loudest.

At a time when I needed the support of my friends the most, it was amazing just how many of them disappeared. Thankfully, I found WAY (Widowed and Young) and through them met other young widows and widowers where we could share our stories and talk about our loved ones without fear of being judged. Complete strangers, always there for advice or just to listen if I needed to talk. It took me a while to build up the courage to go to my first meet-up but I was made to feel so welcome by everyone and I have since made some really good friends. Friends that understand the pain I am going through and who help me through those tough times.

Without WAY and their advice and friendship I would not have made it this far."

We hope you will consider supporting WAY & we look forward to hearing from you at enquiries@widowedandyoung.org.uk. Thank you!

www.widowedandyoung.org.uk

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