

Tireless charity founder is praised by Prime Minister

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THE hard-working founder of a charity which has raised more than £200,000 for good causes has been praised by Number 10.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson has recognised Andrew Baker, founder of Didcot-based Play2Give with a Points of Light award.

Mr Baker has continuously raised money to help those less fortunate than himself since the age of 14.

He was born with a brain injury and was inspired to raise cash for charities by the care and treatment he received. He began fundraising for Oxford Children's Hospital in 2003, firstly as a St Birinus schoolboy.

In late 2016, Andrew succeeded in raising £40,000 for The Play2Give Room at Oxford Children's Hospital.

Aged 19 he organised a charity football tournament which kick-started his idea for a charity.

In 2017 he founded the 'Play2Give' and he has since continued to actively fundraise for children, health and disability charities through a wide number of events, despite living with a brain injury.

In a personal letter to Andrew, Prime Minister Boris Johnson said: "I know you do this with no thought of praise or reward, but allow me to offer my own recognition of how your fundraising over the past 17 years, in tribute to the treatment you received as a child born with a brain injury, has transformed services at Oxford Children's Hospital and supported causes throughout



Andrew Baker winner of the Points of Light award and the founder of the organisation 'Play2Give'.

POINTS OF LIGHT: Andrew Baker is awarded for his exceptional charity work throughout Oxfordshire

the county."

Mr Baker is the latest recipient and is the 1290th winner of the Points of Light award, which recognises volunteers who are making a change in their community.

Mr Baker said: "I feel incredibly honoured and humbled to have been chosen by the Prime Minister to receive the Points of Light award. It is a true pleasure. Giving back and helping others means a lot to me, for all the care and treatment I have received, it is my way to repay the gift of life so that others less fortunate can benefit."

He added: "I have worked

tirelessly for 18 years to help others and 'Play2Give', which I have proudly founded, has continued to grow, changing and saving countless numbers of people's lives in many ways. I would like to stress that to me this recognition is a 'team effort'. I would like to dedicate this award to the incredible team of volunteers whom I am lucky to work with and that make Play2Give the continued success that it is.

"I couldn't do what I do without my team and of course without the fantastic supporters within the community who engage with my

fundraising so well. This is a perfect way to honour them all."

MP for Wantage and Didcot David Johnston said: "I'm delighted that Andrew Baker's hard work on behalf of many local charities has been recognised. Andrew is an inspiring example of someone who refused to let a disadvantage they were born with hold them back and he has worked tirelessly to give back to his local community, achieving more already than most of us will. It is wonderful that his work has been recognised by the Prime Minister in this way."

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