

Boat race 'seas' hospice raise record-breaking £35,000 for charity

Jill Theobald

jill.theobald@jpress.co.uk

A CHILDREN'S hospice is celebrating after its Dragon Boat Race event made some serious waves – and cash for the charity.

The Bluebell Wood event at Manners Lakes in Rotherham raised a record-breaking £35,000 plus Gift Aid for the charity to help support children and families across the region.

The event saw 19 teams from the local community go head-to-head, including Bluebell Wood's own Care Team who took part dressed as Disney characters, paddling across the water in a thrilling series of races.

Each boat, powered by up to 18 paddlers and led by a drummer

keeping rhythm, competed in timed heats before the three fastest teams battled it out in a dramatic finale.

Funds raised from the event – which is now in its eighth year – will go directly towards supporting the £6.7m a year the North Anston-based hospice needs to continue its vital work, offering end-of-life care, post-death support, respite care and sibling support to children, babies, young people and their families across the region.

Heidi Hawkins, chief executive at Bluebell Wood, said: "The annual Dragon Boat race is a truly special event in our calendar and this year, we've been completely blown away by the generosity and enthusiasm of everyone involved, raising this record-breaking amount.

"The monies raised will play a huge part in supporting our work, being there for families at the toughest of times, when they need us most. Thank you to everyone who has made this happen."

The event was sponsored by E.ON as part of its commitment to supporting the communities around its Blackburn Meadows biomass plant in Sheffield and its ongoing support for Bluebell Wood. The company also entered its own team into the race – the E.ON Rowers.

Vijay Tank, chief commercial officer, E.ON Infrastructure Solutions, said: "It was an honour to come along and take part in this year's Dragon Boat Race, along with colleagues from across our business and the wider community."