

Planting the seeds of
wellbeing today, for
a **stronger tomorrow**



Why Acorn's Children's Hospice puts its trust in Winningtemp's revolutionary platform

The hospice care sector supports more than 225,000 people with terminal and life-limiting conditions in the UK each year. But in a year that has had a universally devastating impact on the healthcare industry, it is the caregivers themselves that have witnessed unimaginable heartbreak, shouldered the burden of low staffing levels, comforted, and calmed emotionally charged clients and their families, and remained composed when supplies of basic safety wear ran short. But everyone has their limit, and if ever there was a time to support the people working in these vital roles, it is now.

Matt Bullock is the Director of People & Culture at Acorns Children's Hospice. Based in the West Midlands, Acorns provide care and support to life limited and life threatened children, and their families. Matt joined the multi-site organisation in August 2020, 6 months into the global pandemic, acutely aware of how crucial it is (now more than ever) to put people – your greatest asset – first.

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Matt prioritised the matter by immediately implementing a 'cultural diagnostic' of the entire organisation. He sought to discover how his people were honestly feeling, but he wanted to do so with as little discomfort to them as possible. In addition to initiating numerous focus groups, he introduced [Winningtemp's employee engagement platform](#). An anonymous, user-friendly tool that provides real-time insight into the wellbeing of your people.

As with many organisations, the pandemic has left its footprint on Acorns. By the time Matt had joined, there were already several areas of concern to overcome. Early into the outbreak of Covid-19, the Birmingham Acorns Hospice moved to offer a greatly reduced service to help ease the burden on the NHS. This meant that those working at the Birmingham hospice had to be redeployed to other sites across the region, often up to a 45-minute commute, which was once only 10 minutes.

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However, Matt recognises that the pandemic isn't the cause for all conflicts. “A lot is driven by Covid, but I think there is an underlying theme across the organisation where we seem to have several red flags that should be much better understood so we can set a course to improve”

To understand the situation further, he went as deep as possible. Starting with a large, one-off survey using the Winningtemp tools which he ran for 3 weeks.

His goal was to pinpoint the areas that were working well, and conversely, those which weren't working as well as they could be. "We then paused the survey for 2 weeks before relaunching it to initially run every fortnight with 6 questions each time. The ambition is to get to running the questions weekly, once people can see that feeding into it achieves something positive."

Even in these preliminary days, the data that the platform has provided Matt with has been truly insightful. "It's interesting, because overall for the whole organisation, Acorns has a higher-than-average Index score. Which on the surface you think, "wow that's good – there's nothing wrong". When you start to dig and look at where some of the lower scores are coming from, we have a lower level of engagement and satisfaction in our care delivery teams particularly.

certain set of rules. Collectively, we need consistency."

Matt's deep diagnostics have found that throughout Acorns there are pockets of excellence and pockets that aren't quite so good. "It's about understanding how we are going to set our stall out, in terms of the leadership team and leadership approach.

"That will inform where we need to develop, how are we going to do that, and how we inform our learning and development offer. Which brings it back full circle again as to what's the impact of that for our people? Are they seeing that change? And therefore, realising that their direct feedback has the ability to influence what we do."

They say that mighty oaks from little acorns grow; but the oak does not become 'mighty' overnight. It takes time and patience and will grow through several life stages before maturing, much akin to a seismic shift in culture.

Heat Temperatures Overview of survey scores by area...



“We are focussed on creating a culture in which we constantly listen and feedback. Did something positive happen by accident or was it by design? We must know where the problems are. Only by being brave enough to ask the questions, whether the answers are negative or not, can we possibly improve and know what to focus on.”

For Matt, the power that the insights can provide for other areas of business such as within leadership, is invaluable. "It is forming the basis of the leadership culture that we want to create."

"That's really about a cohesive leadership culture around everybody within the leadership team, effectively 'signing up' to doing things in a certain way, within a