



Welcome to our summer news

As ever, it is my pleasure as CEO at the Hospice to thank you for your support.

Everything we do locally for our patients, their families and their carers is made possible by you. Whether you have used one of our services yourself, or if you are a donor, a fundraiser, a volunteer or a shopper, you power our work. I am always conscious of this and deeply grateful.

You may have seen media coverage recently of Hospice UK's Fairer Funding campaign. We are supporting this because, like other hospices, we receive some NHS funding alongside the support of our local community.

Unfortunately, across England, this funding has not kept up with the rising cost of providing hospice care. This means we are becoming more reliant each year on public generosity.

The good news is that in York and parts of North and East Yorkshire, the area we serve at St Leonard's, we continue to benefit from incredible local support. This, alongside careful financial stewardship over time, means we have some resilience in place. However, we know that many hospices across the country are facing significant challenges despite their best efforts.

I want to reassure you that St Leonard's is financially stable thanks to your support. There is no immediate cause for concern about our services, though we stand in solidarity with hospices across the country who are facing difficult decisions.

These challenges are why many hospice staff, including nurses and leaders from organisations already facing service reductions and staff redundancies, recently met with MPs and delivered a letter to the Prime Minister. The key points highlighted were:

- Nearly 60% of hospices have made, or are planning, cuts to frontline services this year
- Around 380 hospice beds in England are empty due to staffing pressures linked to funding
- Community visits have fallen despite rising demand
- Hospices are increasingly reliant on charitable fundraising to cover core costs

Our message is clear. The current funding model for hospices is not sustainable, and urgent action is needed to protect patient care. We must ensure hospice care remains available for everyone who needs it.

As you read this newsletter, you will see what hospice care really means and the many different ways we support people.

On pages 4 and 5, you can read about the value of talking about future care plans. Further on, we share a partnership that has transformed support for people with frailty, as well as news about our support for people with respiratory conditions.

And of course, you will also find ways you can continue to support these vital services.

Finally, I would like to say a heartfelt thank you to everyone who supported our recent Cuddle Bed Appeal, highlighted on pages 14 and 15. The speed and generosity of your response was truly moving.

On behalf of everyone who benefits from your support, thank you.

Emma Johnson,
Chief Executive



Contents

Conversations that matter.....	4
A place to breathe.....	6
Gifts that change lives: Soo's story.....	8
Gifts that change lives: George's story...	10
Discover what's new for our shops.....	12
Thank you for bringing comfort.....	14
Helping more people stay at home at the end of life.....	16
Generous donation keeps us moving forward.....	17
Ways to support us this year.....	18

Soo wants to challenge common perceptions of hospice care. She said, **“Hospices are not just about end of life care. People should know about them much earlier. They are highly skilled in helping people get on the right path before the end of life, and they have so much to offer in supporting both patients and families through difficult times.”**

(See full story on page 8)

Conversations that matter

When Pauline was diagnosed with colon cancer at 87, she made the decision not to have treatment. What she needed instead was support, and a space where she could talk openly about what lay ahead.

“I have a daughter with autism and was very worried about how she would cope,” she says. “I was looking for somewhere I could meet others and feel part of something. If you don’t want treatment, you can sometimes feel abandoned. Coming here has been the best thing of all.”

Through our Wellbeing and Outreach service, people like Pauline are offered time, space and skilled support to talk honestly, about their worries, their priorities and their future. For Pauline, planning ahead was especially important.

“Because of my situation with my daughter, planning ahead is something that I really wanted to do.”

With support from the team, she was able to have important conversations and make plans for the future, something she describes as life-changing.

“It’s brought me reassurance that I’ve been able to talk about future plans, I don’t worry about the end now. That feels sorted, which is huge.”

Our Wellbeing and Outreach team help people think through what matters most and ensure those wishes are understood by both families and professionals.

“Talking can make a huge difference,” says John, our Palliative Care Social Worker. “Advance care planning helps people decide what they want and makes sure everyone understands those wishes. Above all, it’s about creating a place where people can speak freely.”

“I don’t think there’s anything better than talking,” Pauline says. “If there’s somewhere you can go where you can be really honest, that’s important.”

The Hospice holds a **Wellbeing Drop-in every Thursday from 10am to 12.30pm at the main site on Tadcaster Road in York**. Sessions are open to anyone who wants to talk to our team about what is on their mind. There’s no need to book or have any prior connection with the Hospice, this is a space for the whole community to benefit.



Pauline with John, our Palliative Care Social Worker

A place to breathe

It's been six months since the Hospice launched the Breathing Space group for people with life-limiting lung conditions. The group supports people with conditions such as pulmonary fibrosis, COPD, emphysema or lung cancer and is also open to family members and carers.

Living with a breathing condition can bring challenges, and many people find it helpful to spend time with others who understand those experiences.

The group is run by the Hospice's Wellbeing Coordinators, Lucy and Heather, with support from the Therapies team. Lucy explains:

"Living with a life-limiting breathing condition can feel isolating, but no one needs to face it alone.

Each session offers a space where people can talk, learn from others and spend time with those who understand what life with a lung condition can feel like. Many attendees value the calm environment and supportive conversations that develop naturally

within the group, and we often see people leaving more confident and able to manage their condition."

John (pictured below) was diagnosed with pulmonary fibrosis two years ago and has been attending the Breathing Space group since it launched. Speaking about his experience, he says:

"I have found the meetings invaluable. The therapists have been really informative, and I learn something useful at every meeting. Having the opportunity for an informal chat with fellow attendees over tea and coffee is a great way to end the session."

This free group meets on the **first Wednesday of each month**, alternating between in-person at the Hospice, and online.

To find out more about the Breathing Space and book a place, visit stleonardshospice.org.uk/the-breathing-space-york or call **01904 777 770**.



John

Mary with Rachel, Occupational Therapist, at the Breathing Space group

Gifts that change lives

Soo's story



Soo with Health Care Assistants Jo and Wendy

Soo's husband, Ian, was cared for at the Hospice before he died in January 2022. An Occupational Therapist by background, Soo already knew the Hospice well through her career. She had often supported people who felt unsure about hospice care, helping them feel more comfortable about coming to St Leonard's.

Reflecting on her own experience, Soo shared how much that care meant to her and her family.

"Ian's needs were cared for so well, and so were mine. Abi, the Hospice's Spiritual Lead, was with me at the end, which was brilliant. Having someone there, whether you are spiritual or not, can be a really good thing."

She also highlighted the sensitivity shown to their wider family.

"The staff were very thoughtful in how they helped our family. The follow up was so valuable, they handled all the official documents and certificates. I think when a place like this is handling death it is effective, they are skilled, organised and offer a quality service."

Soo explained that Ian had chosen to leave money in his Will to Leeds Hospital Charity for kidney research. This inspired her to donate ahead of her Will.

"I was involved in how these funds were spent and I got so much enjoyment seeing the difference this made. I thought if Ian could have seen the difference his donation had made, he would have loved it, so I decided to donate during my lifetime."

Soo's decision was also shaped by the support they received at home.

"The St Leonard's Hospice@Home team had been a great support to us before Ian died, coming in over Christmas, before he went into hospital and then to St Leonard's. They kept us going. It's a great service for people who want to be cared for at home."

Soo chose to direct her donation to areas close to her heart.

"I decided to donate a sum to the Hospice@Home team to support their training and development, as it is a subject very close to my heart. I also donated to Jimmy's for an ultrasound, which has successfully reduced a gentleman's kidney tumours and boosted his immunity. It's a joy to see what your money has gone towards."

Soo hopes others might consider giving during their lifetime, too.

"I'd say to others thinking about donating before their Will that you can make a difference. Things are moving fast in medicine, and hospices need to keep up, which takes funding. My hope is that the donation I made will help keep the Hospice@Home service the very best it can be, and maintain how effective it is. I want to make sure the team are valued and that people know about it."

We are very grateful for Soo's generosity and the difference her gift will make.

Gifts that change lives

George's story

A long-time supporter of St Leonard's, George's connection to the Hospice began with the care his wife, Janet, received in 2016.

Janet spent six weeks at the Hospice, during which George visited every morning and every evening. On her final night, a doctor gently told him she didn't have long. George sat by Janet's side, holding her hand until she died peacefully at 6am.

Before coming to the Hospice, Janet had lived with cancer twice. George had cared for her at home for as long as he could.

"She went through so much," he said, "but she was looked after here in a way I'll never forget."

After Janet died in May 2016, George began donating to the Hospice, including donating all his winnings from his quiz team. George had also chosen to leave St Leonard's a gift in his Will.

"It's not about recognition," George said. "It's about gratitude."

"When I think about this place, they give 100% attention to everybody. The treatment they give everyone and the incredible things they do to make things easier, St Leonard's deserves all the support it can get."

He remembers the small touches, too. The cards, the phone calls and the thanks.

"They kept in touch after Janet died. That meant a lot. It's a very special place."

Having recently been cared for at the Hospice himself, George felt the same sense of comfort he felt all those years ago.

"I'm delighted to be somewhere where I've been so well looked after," he said.

George's quiet generosity was his way of honouring Janet, and helping ensure that other families can find comfort during the hardest times.

We're very grateful to George for the difference his gift will make.



George with Amanda, In-memory & Legacy Fundraiser

Discover what's new for our shops

A new Clifton Moor venture

This summer, we're taking our retail offering to the next level by opening a huge new donation centre, furniture shop and clearance store at Clifton Moor.

The new site will allow supporters to drive up, offering an easy option to bring donations from car to door. The furniture shop will stock a range of high-quality, pre-loved items, with a clearance shop offering great-value finds for just £1 each.

The plans for the new site come after we announced our aim to raise £1 million a year through our shops to support the care we provide to local people, both at the Hospice and in the community.

Not only will our new Clifton Moor site enable us to increase the volume of donations handled, we'll also be able offer value to the community and new opportunities for volunteers. If you'd like to know more about volunteering in any of our shops, take a look at our website for all the details.

Did you know?
By donating to and shopping in our shops, you're enabling us to care for 1 in 10 of our patients.

Relocating our much-loved Haxby shop

Later this year, our Haxby shop will be relocated to a new building, the former Barclays bank on the main shopping street in the village.

This new building offers parking for shoppers, enabling the community to donate more easily by pulling straight up to the shop.

Alongside this, the shop itself will be a modern high street experience, similar to our new and renovated shops in Pocklington, Malton, Selby Gowthorpe and Colliergate. With modern fixtures and fittings, digital screens, more space to sort donations and a step-free entrance, we look forward to welcoming the community through our doors.



Thank you for bringing comfort



Jean with her grandchildren and dog, Nelly

Back in March, we launched an appeal to raise £75,000 to buy a cuddle bed for every bedroom at the Hospice.

Over four weeks, the community responded amazingly, raising over £81,000 in total!

The idea to bring cuddle beds to the Hospice, along with the funding for the first four beds, was all thanks to the Ryan family and friends, known as 'Team Dragonflies'. Additional cuddle beds have since been funded by other supporters in our community, including the Burton family, bringing our previous total to nine beds before the appeal was launched.

Thanks to your support, now every one of the 14 bedrooms at the Hospice will have a cuddle bed. This means that nobody has to say goodbye to a loved one from a distance, and every person that comes through our doors will have the chance to be close to those special to them when it matters most.

Thanks to your support, now every one of our 14 bedrooms at the Hospice will have a cuddle bed.

Emma, daughter of Jean (pictured with her grandchildren), said:

"Mum was so lucky to get a cuddle bed after a couple of days and for the duration of her stay. It instantly made her more comfortable and able to manage the various wires and equipment. This actually really made a difference to her quality of sleep.

Of course, the biggest gift it brought was the ability for us to cuddle her, which we frequently did. She really needed those cuddles and so did we.

She was a very loving and tactile person, and it was so important she could cuddle her family, including her adored grandchildren, Gabriel and Sam, as she had always done. The cuddle bed was such a significant factor in how happy Mum was, because of the sheer love, physical closeness and grounding it made possible."

Helping more people stay at home at the end of life

We're delighted to share that we now have a Frailty Palliative Care Nurse Coordinator role in place, supporting people who are physically vulnerable or in declining health to get the care they need, when it matters most.

This follows the success of a pilot in 2025 supported by Hospice UK. During this time, more people were identified earlier and helped to access palliative care.



Clare Mullarkey, Frailty Palliative Care Nurse Coordinator

For many, this meant being able to stay at home at the end of their lives, if that was their wish, surrounded by familiar comforts and the people they love. It also helped reduce emergency hospital visits, making things less stressful for patients and families.

A key part of this work is partnership. By working closely with community colleagues, teams can share knowledge and provide more joined-up, compassionate care.

We're pleased that Clare Mullarkey will continue in this role, helping us reach even more people in our community.

Thank you for your continued support, helping make care like this possible.



Clare with James Rushby, Advanced Clinical Practitioner

Generous donation keeps us moving forward

Thanks to a generous anonymous donation, we were delighted to welcome two new hybrid vehicles to our fleet in March, with a third on the way, dedicated to our Hospice@Home team.

These vehicles will support our nurses and carers as they travel across our community, bringing compassionate hospice care

directly to people in the comfort of their own homes.

Being able to reach patients and families reliably, safely and sustainably is essential to the care and reassurance we provide each day, and we are incredibly grateful for this donation. Thank you for helping us keep moving forward.



Ways to support us this year

At St Leonard's Hospice, we're only able to do what we do thanks to the support of you, our community. Take a look at our upcoming events and activities to see how you can get involved this year.

June

Wolds Walk..... Saturday 13
Explore the beauty of the Yorkshire Wolds and choose from a 12- or 18-mile route.



July

Opening of the new donation centre, furniture shop and clearance store at Clifton Moor
Visit our brand-new site, which will help us raise more funds each year for our care.

Rainbow of Ribbons

Remember and celebrate your loved ones this summer by dedicating a coloured ribbon in their memory.
(13 July to 17 August)

August

York 10K v..... Sunday 2
Put your best foot forward and be part of our 10K team!



September

Inflatable 5K..... Saturday 26
Bounce, swing and jump your way through the world's largest inflatable 5K obstacle course.



October

Make a Will Month

Write or update your Will for free in return for a donation to the Hospice.

Yorkshire Marathon, 10 Mile and Relay v..... Sunday 18
Run through the streets of York, as well as picturesque countryside, in one of these iconic events.

November and December

Light Up A Life

Join us at one of our special Light Up A Life services to remember those dear to us.

Reindeer Rush

Antlers at the ready for this festive school fun run!

Scan the QR code or visit our website to find out more and sign up.



stleonardshospice.org.uk/events

Could you donate unused gift items as prizes for our summer activities?
Get in touch today!

Looking ahead to 2027



Our Moonlight Walk returns on **Saturday 13 March 2027!**
Keep an eye on our website for more details in the coming months.

Play the St Leonard's Hospice Lottery

Support care, win cash! Play now for just £1 per entry, with weekly prizes including £500, a rollover jackpot of up to £5,000 and two exciting Super Draws each year*.

*18+, T&Cs apply



Volunteer with us

We've got a range of volunteering roles available across the Hospice and in our shops. To find out more about how you can get involved, visit stleonardshospice.org.uk/volunteering



👉 **Volunteers needed for these events**
If you can spare some time to help make our events a success, email fundraising@stleonardshospice.org.uk or call 01904 777 777 to let us know!

Remember and celebrate your loved ones by dedicating a ribbon this summer.



Rainbow of Ribbons

Scan the QR code to find out more



stleonardshospice.org.uk/RoR



01904 708 553



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