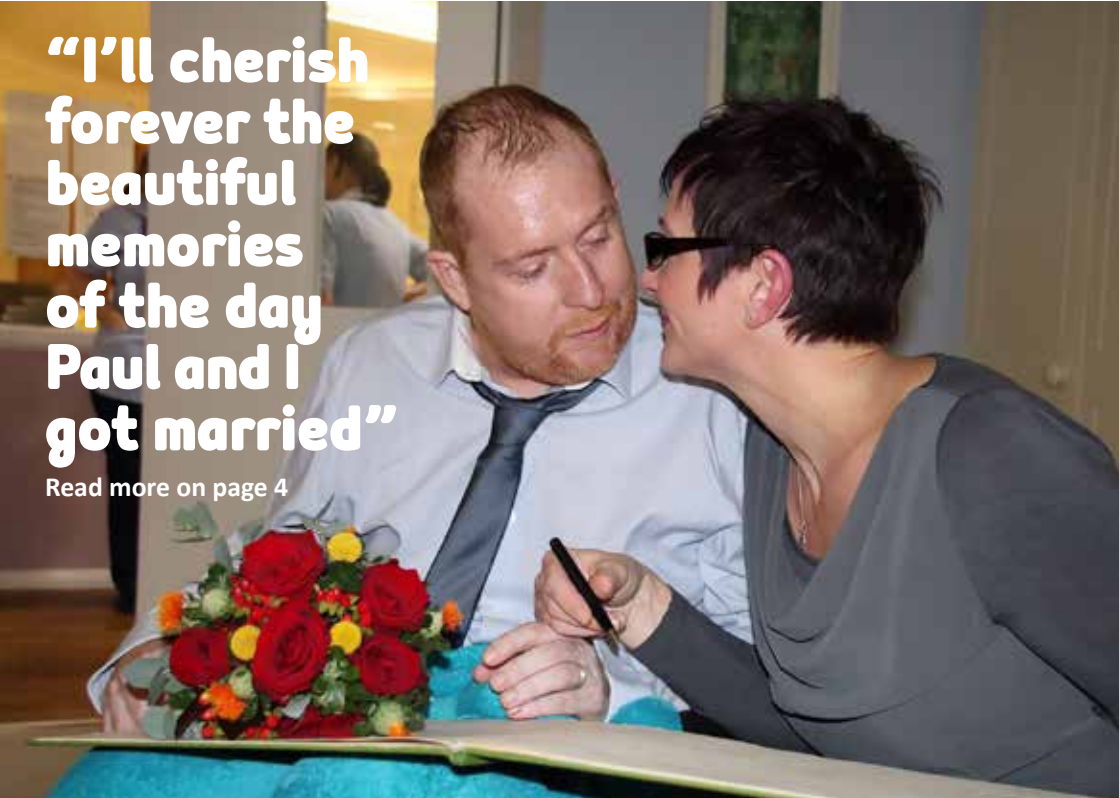


Your Hospice News



“I’ll cherish forever the beautiful memories of the day Paul and I got married”

Read more on page 4



New garden sculpture



Charity shopper extraordinaire



Finding a vocation



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in brief

What's happening at the Hospice

40TH ANNIVERSARY

Next year is our 40th anniversary. As part of our celebrations we want to hear your stories about what the hospice means to you. Email comms@stfrancis.org.uk

GARDEN OPENING

Huge thanks to Peter King from Great Gaddesden for bequeathing to us the Myeloma UK Garden – which won a silver-gilt award at this year's RHS Chelsea Flower Show! Pop up and see it some time. You won't miss it!

AGM

Don't forget to come along to our AGM on Wednesday 24th October at 7pm. This year's guest speaker will be Chris Wyles of Saracens Rugby Club. All welcome.

GOING CONTACTLESS!

We want to make it easy for you to donate and make a difference. No cash? No problem! Just tap to give! Look out for our contactless giving points in selected shops, at the Hospice and at our events over the coming months.

Care at home

Starting this September, we are delighted to be working with other local hospices on a pilot project to support people identified with complex needs and approaching the end of their lives, requiring care in their own homes, seven days a week from 8am to 10pm.

Hospice healthcare staff will provide regular hands-on care to patients in a variety of ways supporting their personal identified needs and those of their families.

Fay Richardson, Director of Care at the Hospice, said "This is good news as it sees an expansion of our community service, enabling us to care for more people."

What's new on the IPU

We have appointed our first ever Nurse Consultant on the IPU to support the medical team. Among her new duties, Jo Fernandes, who has worked at the Hospice for over 16 years, will be supporting nurse-led admissions to our beds. IPU staff have also been working hard to reduce falls on the unit with a new initiative which helps nurses to identify those patients at greater risk of falling.

Finally, good luck to IPU nurses Sam Healy and Kathy Davis who will be taking on Trek Sahara in November to raise money for the Hospice!



Garden sculpture

A stunning wood carving of a Red Kite recently flew into our gardens, generously donated by wood carver Dan Cordell. It has a perfect home looking out over the Chiltern hills of Ashridge inspiring us all to spread our wings, 'fly' and feel free!



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CARING FOR THOSE WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES

Following a successful pilot, our education team has received a grant to expand its end of life training programme to those caring for people with learning disabilities in care homes. The joint project with five other hospices aims to enhance the care and support for adults with learning disabilities with end of life needs and raise awareness among staff working in this specialised setting.

VOLUNTEERS WANTED

Could you donate your skills and time to the Hospice? We need photographers, shop volunteers, event marshals, homebox collectors, gardeners, IT specialists, to name just a few. If you think you could help, visit the volunteering page on our website. **We'd love to hear from you!**



Keeping it confidential

Congratulations to our new Director of Care, Fay Richardson, who has also been appointed our Caldicott Guardian responsible for protecting the confidentiality of people's health and care information and making sure it is used properly. Fay, who was appointed in March, has worked for the Hospice for 18 years, initially working on the Inpatient Unit, then as a Community Clinical Nurse Specialist and then five years leading our Community Nursing Services team.

Supporting children

A huge shout out to Children in Need for its £180,000 grant over three years to help fund our Children and Young People's Support team. The team work with nearly 100 young people each year who are bereaved or facing loss. They also offer resource packs to families containing information as well as a different handmade elephant – the mascot of our children's services – appropriate for one of the four age groups.



Our annual report

We've now published our annual report for 2017/18. To read the report visit www.stfrancis.org.uk/annualreport



Katie's story

Thanks to your support we are able to help people like Katie and her late husband Paul share precious moments at the end of life.



Paul and I had always planned to get married but Paul wanted to do it properly. We got married at the Hospice at 6.30pm on 23rd November 2017 after only deciding to get married at 2.15pm that afternoon! It was amazing how as soon as we said we wanted to get married, everyone rallied round to help make it happen.

I didn't know Paul's ring size so before I left the Hospice to get changed and pick up a shirt and tie for Paul, I found a sticker and wound it round his finger, which I then took to the jewellers to buy rings for us both.

When I got back to the Hospice, the staff had decorated the chapel and the day room with balloons, there were champagne glasses at the ready and paper hearts had been scattered over the floor. It looked beautiful.

While it was a celebration, it was just going to be for Paul and I as he was too ill for a big celebration but word had got round and our families and close friends also turned up. Paul's best man helped him to sign the register as the cancer had spread to his brain and he wasn't able to do it himself.

Paul had malignant melanoma which attacked most of his organs. He'd had

skin cancer seven years earlier but had been given the all clear in November 2015. However, in May 2017 he started feeling unwell again. An ultra-sound scan revealed several lumps in his neck. Further investigations showed he also had a mass in his stomach where the melanoma had got entangled with his large intestine. We knew then that he would just be receiving palliative care.

I'd heard from friends about The Hospice of St Francis and how not only is the patient care fantastic but also how they support their families. I knew this was where I wanted Paul to be and pushed for him to be moved there.

He was admitted on 14th November and died two weeks later during which time we celebrated his 44th birthday and got married. He also had his beloved motorbike brought to the Hospice. He called it his 'baby' and it was the love of his life. His dad

rode it up and parked it on the patio of his room so he could look out of his window and see it. Paul had been concerned when he came to the Hospice that he wouldn't see his beloved Honda Valkyrie, but the Hospice made it happen for him.



Since he died my two youngest children Lowri, 10, and Archie, 8, have been up to the Hospice nearly every week. They miss him terribly and we talk about him every day but the counselling and support they've received has helped them come to terms with what has happened. I haven't been brave enough to start counselling yet but it's comforting to know the Hospice will be there for me when the time comes.

"The Hospice is such a special place and I'll cherish forever the beautiful memories of the day Paul and I got married."

I'm so grateful to everyone who helped make it happen. All the right people pulled together at the right time to give us the perfect end.

When Paul went to sleep forever, it was an indescribable pain but the Hospice has helped ease that pain and continues to do so. As a family we have joined in some of the fundraising events and will continue to do so in the hope that we can help the Hospice help others.

Read more about how we've helped people live their precious lives well at www.stfrancis.org.uk/ourstories

Thank You

The Hospice is delighted to announce a new corporate partnership with Aitchisons estate agents that will see the Berkhamsted and St Albans offices donate £250 for every house they sell during two 12-week periods. Called 'Every Home is Precious', it emphasises Aitchison's commitment to its local community with the income being used to expand our care at home service.

Thanks to the thousands of you who turned out in all weathers, hot or cold, rain or shine, to take part in our summer fundraising events - Bubble Rush, Midnight Walk, KAPOW and our Garden Party. Thanks also to everyone who has cycled, run, skydived, baked, walked or held any other fundraising event for us. We couldn't do what we do without you!



Christmas at the hospice

CARDS NOW ON SALE!

It may seem like summer is not yet behind us but for those who like to be prepared, our exciting range of Christmas cards for 2018 is now on sale. Featuring polar bears, jolly Santas and traditional snowy scenes, the selection of 22 festive cards is available from all Hospice shops and online at www.stfrancis.org.uk/christmascards. Packs are priced from £3.25 for 10 and 100% of the profits go directly to the Hospice.



CHRISTMAS SHOPPING EVENTS

Get your Christmas shopping off to a flying start and enjoy a glass of festive fizz and nibbles at our Christmas shopping events.

Returned to Glory

Thursday 1st November
5pm-7pm

number twenty

Thursday 8th November
5pm-7pm –
15% off all purchases!

Amy, charity shopper extraordinaire

We discovered Amy Simpson, 34, from Berkhamsted on Instagram @stylemeonashoestring. She's a stay-at-home mum of three young children who loves fashion but doesn't have a huge amount of spare cash to spend on clothes so scours the charity shops to find versatile items to mix and match with her current wardrobe. She's one of our Berkhamsted shop's regular customers! Her top Hospice shop finds are a Massimo Dutti dress and a floaty Monsoon skirt. "The quality and style is great and there is a huge



variety of clothes, which are all well priced," she enthuses. "I would never have such a great wardrobe if it wasn't for my charity shop purchases and the fact that the Hospice is about helping people to live their lives well, as well as helping people to have a good death, is something really special and deserves our support." Happy shopping Amy!

Sunday trading

Our Berkhamsted and Marshalswick charity shops have extended their opening hours and are now open for shopping on Sundays. Come along, have a browse and enjoy some weekend retail therapy. The shops will be open on Sundays for shopping only, but can accept donations from Monday to Saturday. **Visit our website for details of opening hours.** www.stfrancis.org.uk/trading



Events in focus



Mud Pack Challenge

Sunday 21st October Ashridge House

Our legendary Mud Pack Challenge is back! Places are filling fast for the five or 10-mile obstacle course through the beautiful grounds of the historic country estate.

"The best thing about Mud Pack is the team work. There's such a good team spirit. You don't have to be super-fit to take part. Anyone can do it, it's all about having fun."

Bethan Tossell, 24

www.stfrancis.org.uk/mudpack

Trek India

November 2019

Take on the challenge of a lifetime by trekking through the lush landscape of India's tropical Kerala region. After trekking through the highest tea plantation in the world, spend two days on activities supporting a children's hospice to improve facilities for patients and their families.

www.stfrancis.org.uk/trekindia



Stephanie Holman

Stephanie, 26, has been volunteering at the Hospice as a Healthcare Assistant whilst she explored the possibility



of becoming a nurse having left university with a modern languages degree! She said, "I thought volunteering at the Hospice would help me decide whether nursing is right for me. I started off shadowing senior nurses who showed me the ropes and I joined the other HCAs washing and bathing patients. At first I felt like a spare part but I soon got to grips with it! I quickly felt very comfortable and it was something I could see myself doing long-term. What appeals to me about people-centred jobs like this is that you can actually see the difference you're making to people's lives. "At the Hospice you're able to properly care for patients because you have the time to do so. It is this more than anything that has helped nurture my desire to care." Stephanie has now enrolled on a Masters course in Adult Nursing at the University of Hertfordshire and we wish her all the best for her future career!

Take part and make a difference this winter

Santa Dash and Jingle Dog

Riverside,
Hemel Hempstead
Sunday 9th December

Join hundreds of Santas and their
dashing dogs for our annual
festive fundraiser.

Biggest Loser

Starts January 2019

Shed the festive pounds and
get active in 2019 by taking
on our 12-week fitness
and weight loss
challenge.

Wear It Festive

14th December

Get your friends or company
involved, don your favourite
festive clothing - and
make a donation to
the Hospice.

Christmas Carol Concert

St Albans Cathedral
Sunday 16th December

Join us for a magical afternoon
of popular carols with special
performances from The
Harpenden Choral
Society.

Christmas Tree Collection

Our Christmas tree collection is
back for 2019 and we'll be rolling
it out to even more postcodes
including St Albans,
Harpenden and Hemel
Hempstead.

Christmas Market

Aubrey Park Hotel,
Hemel Hempstead
Saturday 1st December

Join us for our very first Christmas
market with 25 quality stalls selling a
variety of gifts and produce.
We're also holding a Christmas
Wreath making workshop.

Strictly Learn Dancing

Starts January 2019

Back by popular demand.
Boost your confidence by taking on
our challenge and learning how to
dance like the Strictly stars. This
unique challenge has limited
places, so apply today!

Find out
more about
how you can
take part

[stfrancis.org.uk/
events](http://stfrancis.org.uk/events)