

Your Hospice News



Care at Home



Queen's Award for Voluntary Service



The Refill Project



News

in brief

What's happening at the Hospice

AGM

Don't forget to come along to our AGM on **Wednesday 23rd October**. This year's guest speaker will be actress Fiona Dolman, who plays DCI John Barnaby's wife Sarah in TV's *Midsomer Murders*. Inspired by her experience of our care for her late father, Gordon, novice runner Fiona completed this year's London Marathon for Hospice UK, raising nearly £7,500 and going on to become one of its Celebrity Ambassadors. All welcome.

NEW TRUSTEES

Welcome to Shailen Rao and Massimo Petronio, who've joined us as trustees this summer. Find out more about all our trustees and governance at stfrancis.org.uk/about-us



OUR IMPACT REPORT

We'll soon be publishing our Impact Report for 2018/19. To read it visit stfrancis.org.uk/impactreport



Yogi at home with Clinical Nurse Specialist Sue, from our Community Nursing Team

Care at home

Our 18-month pilot project in collaboration with Herts Valley Clinical Commissioning Group and other local hospices to support patients at home 24/7 with complex needs approaching the end of life, is proving a great success.

A year in, we've trained 21 carers who have supported 48 patients, trebling the initial number of monthly home visits they've made from an average of 96 to 274.

Yogesh, known as 'Yogi', Bhatt, 63, from Hemel Hempstead, who has several progressive lung conditions which leave him tired and breathless, is one beneficiary. He says, *"When I got out of hospital, I wasn't sure what would happen and how I'd be able to carry on the weaker I got, but all the carers have been extremely helpful. They listen – nothing is too much trouble. They have made a tremendous difference to me.*

"They and Sue and Louise from the Hospice's Community Nursing Team have given me a better quality of life and made me less anxious. They have helped me tremendously to be myself and helped me keep my positive attitude."

Under the rules of the pilot, the NHS funds 12 weeks of care but we continued to provide care for an extra two weeks until CHC (Continuing Health Care) funding was in place for Yogi to receive a full NHS care package, whilst continuing to be supported at home by our Community Nursing Team.

The BBC spoke to Yogi and his daughter Nimita, 29, who took part in our recent Walk With Us and raised over £1,000, for part of a three-part feature on hospice care which was aired on BBC London News earlier this month.

Building Work...

Ryans Builders have been with us this summer and we're delighted to say, delivered our Building Project on time, as planned.

They have replaced all our faulty hot water pipes and changed the layout of our Spring Centre, creating more flexible and private spaces - including new doors from therapy rooms into the garden. Our thanks to all 25 organisations who have supported us during this project.



A Balance and Strength Class taking place at Egerton-Rothesay School

Special thanks to Egerton-Rothesay School, Champneys, Rothschild House and Everest GP Surgeries, Chess Medical Centre and Peace and Rennie Grove Hospice Care who loaned us their premises and welcomed us. Their support meant our care could continue in

different locations for everyone who needed us during July and August while our ground floor was temporarily out of action.

The project has been possible thanks to grants and donations from The Wolfson Foundation, The Albert Hunt Trust, The Bernard Sunley Foundation, The Beatrice Laing Trust, The Boxmoor and Berkhamsted Benevolent Society, The Edward Gostling Foundation and The Sylvia Waddilove Foundation.

Special thanks to the John Apthorp Charity for its grant that means we now have lighting in our car park for the winter



The Nordic Walking group in action also at Egerton-Rothesay School

months and have been able to repair sunken sections of our driveway and drains. Finally, thanks to Berkhamsted Rotary Club for funding to give the rooms and corridors a fresh lick of paint.

News in brief

What's happening at the Hospice

ROBERT VOSS

We are delighted to welcome the Lord-Lieutenant of Hertfordshire, Robert Voss, CBE, as a Patron of the Hospice.

Mr Voss, who was awarded a CBE for services to British Industry and voluntary work in the UK in the New Year's Honours List of 2014, has been a supporter of ours for some time and will formally present our Queen's Award for Voluntary Services at our Open Afternoon here at the Hospice on 22nd September.

He said, "I am delighted to become a Patron of The Hospice of St Francis. The atmosphere around St Francis is one of love and support and I look forward to helping build on that ethos."





The Dog Show at our Garden Party went down a storm

In June, our *Awareness Day* in Berkhamsted provided the backdrop for the re-creation of our founding Prayer Vigil at St Peter's Church, which was celebrated by over 40 faith groups across our catchment. Over 5,000 people enjoyed our *Garden Party* at Ashridge House, helping us raise a record £50,000. *Walk with Us* and our *Children's Summer BBQ* saw the mercury rise to 34 degrees, while 26 thrill-seekers leapt from 13,000 feet to raise over £20,000 at our *Anniversary Skydive!*

Hospice CEO, Kate Phipps-Wiltshire, who was one of our 26 skydivers, said, *"Thank you to everyone who has supported us this summer at our anniversary events, making them so memorable, and everyone who has supported us over the past 40 years."*

At many of these events, we shared little felt elephants - friends of 'Frankie,' the mascot of our Children's Team - who has a great memory and never forgets special people.



They were lovingly made by the ladies of our Craft Group so we too could remember and thank you for your support.

"By celebrating this birthday we are saying a huge thank you to people near and far who've helped, year after year, to keep our doors open," added Kate. *"The Hospice of St Francis is a special place, with people you can rely on to help you live your precious life well, whatever life throws at you."*

There's plenty more to come this autumn! We'd love to see you at our Open Afternoon on 22nd September, at our '40 Years of Fashion' Show on 25th September or at our annual Mud Pack Challenge at Ashridge House on 13th October.

Find out how you can get involved by volunteering, enjoying our events or donating 40p a day in our birthday year to help sustain our future at: stfrancis.org.uk

Caribbean Diversity BBQ

More than 100 people enjoyed our Caribbean Diversity BBQ at Redbourn's Aubrey Park Hotel in August to honour our British-Jamaican founder Pam Macpherson.

We were deeply honoured by the attendance of Baroness Doreen Lawrence, OBE, who was there as a personal friend of Hospice Association Member, Linda Haye, OBE, DL.

Linda, with the help of Hospice staff, brought together the Mayors of St Albans and Dacorum, Tracey Blackwood, Minister Counsellor for the Diaspora and Consular Affairs, representing His Excellency the High Commissioner of Jamaica, members of the Macpherson family, Clive Saunders, Chair of the Watford African Caribbean Association and Dr Theresa Freeman-Wang - renowned in the field of colposcopy - as VIP guests for the occasion.

We showcased Pam's achievements, her Jamaican heritage and 40 years of hospice care. Linda spoke about diversity in modern Britain and Brenda Scott-Oldfield spoke movingly about her experience of our care together with members of our clinical team. Launching our bed appeal, the money raised has paid for two days of care.



Queen's Award for Voluntary Service

In May we were thrilled to receive the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service, which The Lord-Lieutenant of Hertfordshire, Robert Voss, CBE, will present during our Open Afternoon on 22nd September.

Founded by volunteers in 1979, volunteers are our heart and soul. Forty years on, we have 1,200 active volunteers aged 14-90, fulfilling 70 roles across the Hospice.

"I'm absolutely delighted that our volunteers and the Hospice are being recognised with this collective equivalent of an MBE," said Hospice CEO, Kate Phipps-Wiltshire. "It's a prestigious award and a huge tribute. I'd like to thank and congratulate each and every one of them, past and present, for their loyalty and dedication, without which we simply wouldn't be able to do what we do."



Fiona's story

We're honoured and proud that actress Fiona Dolman's experience of our care for her late father Gordon has inspired Fiona to be the guest speaker at our October AGM.

While her father was ill, Fiona, 49, took up running, and after he died she completed the London Marathon for Hospice UK in his

memory, raising £7,450 for the national hospice charity so more people can receive the same love and care that he did.

"In 2013, aged 78, my dad was diagnosed with myeloma, or blood cancer. It was a terrible few months with multiple hospital admissions, juggling different doses and types of chemotherapy to find one that would work.

My mother – the love of his life and wife of 54 years - was obviously distraught and the rest of my family (three siblings) rallied and organised round-the-clock care. For me, trying to juggle my emotions, remain useful and attempt to organise help, felt at times completely and utterly overwhelming.

*Then the team at The Hospice of St Francis came into our lives. They were there through everything, visiting Dad at home and in hospital, liaising with doctors about medication, talking through symptoms and expectations, providing equipment and 24/7 contact numbers - there was ALWAYS someone at the end of the phone who knew what to do. **They were practical, caring, sensible and full of empathy. They were a lifeline.***

Dad recovered well and regular chemo kept the cancer at bay for four more years, during which time the St Francis team kept in regular contact, visiting him and providing physio at

home and at the Hospice. They remained by his side, offering advice and help whenever it was needed.

The myeloma began to accelerate in November 2017, necessitating a different chemo regime. Dad had a bad chest cold through January and collapsed in February. The Hospice team came back in full force and eventually admitted him to St Francis, nursing him through pneumonia and getting him strong enough to return home.

Dad spent the next year on and off chemo. His oncologist, nurses and the St Francis team worked hard to help him find a balance and get back on his feet. He managed to have a good summer with lots of family time.

But in November 2018 when Dad collapsed and was admitted to hospital, it became clear nothing more could be done and we were looking at making his last days as comfortable as possible. Again, the St Francis team rallied round and at the end of November Dad was admitted for end of life care.

Dad had known that he wanted to spend his last days at St Francis and it was very clear why. He had a beautiful room with a view of the incredible garden and numerous bird feeders.

The exceptional nurses took their time to really talk with Dad - he was very fond of them as they were of him. Every single member of staff from the cleaners to the consultants ALL took their time and gave their respect and patience to Dad and to all of us.

Living in Kent, I'd felt helpless being so far away but the peace that came from Dad being at St Francis was immeasurable. Every phone call I made (there were many!) was handled beautifully.

I did a couple of midnight runs to be with him and was greeted like a friend and given tea, toast and much-needed hugs at 2am. The flow of information was clear and steady, no question ever deemed too small.



When it became clear Dad didn't have much longer we felt fully informed. I moved into Dad's room and remained with him for his last week. My sister stayed a few nights, my brother and mum visited each day and my other brother returned from abroad to be with us. It honestly felt like we were the only family being cared for, such was the level of focus and attention.

We were able to just be family and be together. There were lots of tears and a surprising amount of laughter. **On what turned out to be his last day we played charades - Dad's favourite game - over his bed.** Dad's eyes were closed but we knew he could hear us - everyone could and no-one minded one bit. One of the consultants even joined us for one round!

A nurse had said to me that many people like to die alone and wait until their loved one has left the room, so it wasn't such a terrible shock when I returned from outside to my sister saying Dad had left us while she'd also been out of the room making tea.

The absolute love and empathy from all of the staff over the next eight hours was incredible. They gave us all the time we needed, the chaplain wrote a beautiful blessing and included a few words we'd asked him to add.

One of my strongest memories is of the nurse who, as she talked to us about the next steps, gently held and stroked my dad's hand. She referred to him with such love and compassion it was overwhelming.

I hate that I'm writing 'nurse' and not calling these extraordinary people by names I wish I could remember. I will never forget their faces and their love. For a time they were part of our family. They held us together.

I always thought hospices were there only at the end of someone's life - I had no idea of all the care they provide during life. Our experience with St Francis was of being supported the whole way. **To have had to make this journey without them would be unthinkable.**

I feel very blessed, knowing that Dad was exactly where he wanted to be at the end and at peace. The Hospice of St Francis really is heaven on earth and we will be forever grateful."



Mud Pack Challenge

Our legendary Mud Pack Challenge is back and we're looking for recruits! Accept your mission and gather your squad for the five or 10-mile muddy obstacle course at Ashridge House on Sunday 13th October.

Cheryl Lyon has recruited 15 chums already. *"As a group we're at all levels of fitness but this is our fourth year and Mud Pack is such a laugh - there's something about working together as a team and getting covered in mud that's just so hilarious and different from our usual routines!"*

Individuals welcome too! We're here for everyone! Visit stfrancis.org.uk/mudpack



Open Afternoon

Enjoy the return of steelpan pioneer Sterling Betancourt, MBE, and his steel band, as well as tours of our breathtaking seven-acre gardens, stalls, family activities including storytelling with local children's author and Book Trust Reading Champion, Pete Johnson, and refreshments at our Open Afternoon on Sunday 22nd September.

Visit our Art Exhibition and bid in our auction of 40 beautiful works of art, kindly donated by accomplished local artists, meet our Lord-Lieutenant and find out more about the Hospice. Find out more at stfrancis.org.uk/openafternoon



Make A Will Month



If you've been thinking about making a will for a while, take advantage of the free advice of trusted local solicitors who will write your will for free during September in exchange for a donation to the Hospice.

Find out more about participating solicitors at: stfrancis.org.uk/maw

New Year, New You

As this year's *Strictly* gets under way, you too can sashay like the stars! **Our *Strictly Learn Dancing*** competition is a fun, informal and totally judge-free way to dust off those dance shoes, learn new skills and help raise vital funds for the Hospice. Come and have a ball – this friendly competition is a must do to beat the winter blues!

If dancing's not your thing, our ***Biggest Loser*** fitness and wellbeing challenge returns in January. Lose weight and gain pounds for the Hospice amongst friends and arm yourself with the nutritional and exercise know-how to get fit and healthy in 2020 and beyond.

Fortify us for the next 40 years



As we continue to celebrate 40 years of care, why not set up a monthly direct debit of just 40p a day, or £12 a month, knowing that your regular gift will help us to plan for the future and sustain our services when they're needed?

You can't buy much for 40p these days, but at The Hospice of St Francis we can make sure your 40p goes the extra mile!



Christmas with the Hospice

JOIN US THIS CHRISTMAS

Have fun with your loved ones this Christmas whilst supporting The Hospice of St Francis at not one but two ***festive markets*** on **Sunday 10th November and Saturday 30th**

November where you can buy everything on your gift list. Alternatively, sing your merry heart out at our ever popular ***Carol Concert*** at St Albans Cathedral, featuring performances from talented local choirs. See back cover for more details.



Run off all those extra December treats at our morning ***Santa Dash*** on Sunday 15th December and finally, when all the festivities are over, let us help you clear up by collecting and ***recycling your Christmas Tree*** from homes in Harpenden, St Albans and Hemel. Register your tree in advance and we'll do the rest! charityxmastreecollection.com

Christmas at the Hospice

CHRISTMAS SHOPPING EVENTS

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

Returned to Glory

Thursday 7th November
5pm – 7.30pm

Thursday 5th December
6pm – 8pm

number twenty

Pop up at
Returned to Glory
7th November –
21st December

Customer Christmas
Shopping Event
Sunday 17th November
11am – 4.30pm

15% discount and
glass of fizz

St Albans Pop Up
Christopher Place,
18th November –
1st December

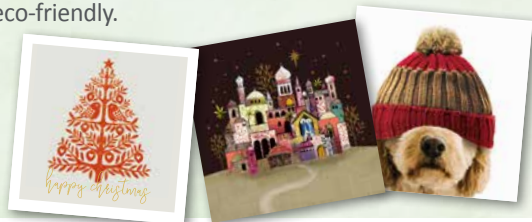


Shop St Francis – shop green!

- Today, protecting our environment is a priority and we've been doing our bit too. Charity shops save over 350,000 tonnes of rag from landfill, reducing CO2 emissions in the process. We ensure that nothing goes to waste by recycling clothing which can't be sold, raising over £100,000 a year for the Hospice.
- At **Returned to Glory** our re-loved furniture showroom, we upcycle pieces of unwanted furniture by re-painting or re-upholstering and have recently joined the mission to reduce the use of single use plastic by stocking products from **The Refill Project**. Come on down to fill your pre-loved (and washed) empty containers with ethically sourced household cleaning and bathroom products!



- **number twenty** has a growing range of eco-friendly products from beeswax wraps and insect hotels, to recycled coffee cups, glasses and bags. Our buyers are focusing on sourcing more of these products when they visit the Trade Shows and number twenty's recent **Dacorum Business Heroes Award** reflects this too.
- **Christmas cards** are now on sale in our shops or order online at www.strancis.org.uk/christmascards As part of our range development we're working with suppliers to make the card designs of the future more eco-friendly.



Events

in focus

Fashion Show

Wednesday 25th September,
7.30pm – 9.30pm

Shendish Manor, Apsley, HP3 0AA

Join us for a sophisticated evening of style, sparkle and shoulder pads as we look back on 40 years of fashion to mark the Hospice's 40th birthday! Book your tickets now! stfrancis.org.uk/fashionshow

Wedding Dress Ball

Saturday 28th September, 7pm till late
Shendish Manor, Apsley, HP3 0AA

Desperate for the chance to wear your wedding dress again or just love the idea of dressing up in wedding glam? Whether newly married, long-term partners, single, separated or just up for a laugh, this event is a must! Get frocked for a good cause! Visit stfrancis.org.uk/wedding to book your tickets.

Mud Pack Challenge

Sunday 13th October
Ashridge House HP4 1NS
See page 8 for details.



2020 Virgin London Marathon/ Brighton Marathon

If you're one of the lucky runners to secure a place in the ballot, why not run for us? We'll support you every step of the way and give you a special hospice running vest. If you don't win a ballot place we have places available in the Brighton Marathon. Visit stfrancis.org.uk/brightonmarathon for more information.



The Firewalk Challenge and Fireworks

Saturday 2nd November,
2.30pm – 5.30pm

Fireworks start at 7.30pm

Verulamium Park, St Albans.

Walk on fire by joining us in The Firewalk Challenge 2019, the ultimate test of mind over matter! Then enjoy a spectacular evening of fantastic fireworks, food and fun for the whole family. Call 01442 869555 or email fundraising@stfrancis.org.uk stfrancis.org.uk/firewalk-and-fireworks



Winter Markets

Sunday 10th November, 10am – 4pm

Our 2018 Winter Market was such a success that we have two dates for your diary this year!

Harpenden Winter Market, Harpenden Public Halls, Southdown Road, Harpenden, AL5 1TE.

Join us again for a further opportunity to shop for all your festive gifts on

Saturday 30th November, 10am – 4pm

Aubrey Park Hotel, AL3 7AF

Santa Dash

Sunday 15th December, 10am

**Riverside Shopping Centre,
Hemel Hempstead**

Our festive family fundraiser is back so don your festive attire and sprint, stroll or scoot the route in style! stfrancis.org.uk/santadash



Carol Concert

St Albans Cathedral

Sunday 15th December

Tickets on sale from 1st October direct from the Cathedral website or Box Office on 01727 890290. stfrancis.org.uk/carolconcert

Christmas Tree Collection

Fed up of the post-Christmas ritual of squeezing your tree into your garden waste bin or car boot? Avoid the pine needles and let us collect your tree from your door on 11th and 12th January 2020! charityxmastreecollection.com

Strictly Learn Dancing

Starting in the New Year 2020



Register your interest at stfrancis.org.uk/strictly

Biggest Loser

Starting in the New Year 2020

Register your interest at stfrancis.org.uk/biggestloser



Skydive

Sunday 29th March 2020

Hinton Airfield, Brackley



If you're looking for a high flying challenge why not take to the skies for The Hospice of St

Francis?! Crazy dare devils needed to take on a Sponsored Tandem Skydive. Sign up soon to avoid disappointment - both of our 2019 dates were sell-outs! stfrancis.org.uk/skydive

**Find out more about all
our events at**

stfrancis.org.uk/events
or call **01442 869555**.