



Specialist Care for the
people of St Helens
and Knowsley

Together we are Willowbrook

Your local hospice newsletter

Registered Charity No. 1020240
SPRING/SUMMER 2024

GET READY FOR... MOONLIGHT WALK 2024

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FOR OUR
EVENTS

SATURDAY 14TH SEPTEMBER 2024

THE LIVING WELL, BOROUGH ROAD, ST HELENS

Highlights inside...

- Making a patient's wish come true
- Read about the amazing work our team do to make a difference to our patient's care
- Hear about the incredible donations made by our fantastic fundraisers
- Join the Willowbrook Hospice Lottery



Call the Fundraising Office on **01744 453798**
or e-mail events@willowbrookhospice.org.uk



www.willowbrook.org.uk



Welcome...

On behalf of all our staff and volunteers, thank you for your support for the hospice. We are always grateful to everyone who is able to support our work whilst recognising that, in these current times, it is even more of a challenge for many people.

Although we receive some funding direct from the NHS, this represents only 29% of the money needed to deliver these crucial services to our patients across St Helens and Knowsley. We therefore rely heavily on you, as members of our community, to raise the additional £3.6m needed to care for people at the end of their lives.

Owing to your amazing support, Willowbrook has been delivering specialist palliative care and support for patients and carers for 27 years. We do this through our inpatient unit, outpatient clinics, outreach wellbeing services and bereavement support and touch the lives of many people each year.

If you are able to make a donation now, you will help us to continue to do this for at least the next 27 years. Many people also choose to leave us a donation in their will. For any information on this, please speak to a member of our Fundraising team.

We hope you enjoy reading the latest edition of our Willowbrook newsletter but if you would like to find out more about our work, please visit our website at www.willowbrook.org.uk where you can view the hospice, read about our fantastic nursing, outreach and medical teams and consider signing up as a volunteer.

**Alun,
Lynda and
Paula**
Executive
Leadership
Team



Paula, Alun and Lynda.

Regular Giving

Your support will enable us to continue to provide first class, holistic and specialist care to our patients and their families.

4 Easy Steps to Setup:

1. Click the button, top right, to take you to our donation page.
2. Tell us how often you would like to give.
3. Choose how much you would like to donate.
4. We will just need a little bit more information from you...

Thank you for becoming a regular giver and making a big difference!



CLICK
HERE

Patient story

Michelle's mum Sue was cared for by Willowbrook in December 2023. Her Dad accessed our Outreach Services four years ago also, so Michelle has a strong connection to Willowbrook. So much so that she has pledged to fundraise as a way of saying 'Thank You' to the team that provided support to her parents, and to Michelle and her family whilst they grieve. Here is her story:

"Our beautiful Mum passed away from oesophageal cancer on 29th December 2023, after suddenly showing symptoms just seven weeks before.

Her symptoms soon became very complicated and were not under control at home, but we were absolutely blessed that Willowbrook found a bed for Mum and made her so comfortable in the last two weeks of her life. They rescued us, at a time when we were in a really upsetting and scary situation that had knocked us for six and wasn't remotely expected, we were all in shock.

From the moment we arrived at Willowbrook, our mum was cared for so beautifully. It was quite incredible. Nothing was too much trouble for the staff, not only for Mum but for us too, checking we were ok and supporting us all as a family. It felt like being part of one big family being there.

Mum was always so full of life and full of fun. We were able to still laugh and be ourselves, and with the staff too. If you've never been to a hospice, it isn't what you would expect – it's not a dull, dark, gloomy place, it's a place you can spend quality and special time with your loved ones in the time that you have left together; a chance to make more memories together. The children were able to come and see her, there's a playground for them, and they liked popping into the cafe for something nice to eat – it was comfortable and just incredible that Mum was at the heart of everything to do with her care and they respected and honoured all of her decisions.

She was able to experience her last couple weeks of her life as

*Tattoos to
commemorate
Michelle's mum.*



positively as could be in this situation – from chats and laughs, to ice lollies or her favourite meals being prepared for her, we even had the nicest Christmas dinner ever (we would have happily paid for that in a restaurant!), and Mum enjoyed a 'No-Secco' and lemonade! Little things like that makes a real difference when someone is at their end of life.

One of the staff members who cared for Mum had tattoos, Mum said "you know what, I wish I had got a tattoo now!" That lovely lady went and ordered tattoo transfers for Mum! She gave one to mum, myself and my daughter!! Mum was absolutely delighted, she was excited to show it off, as she had always wanted one but never got round to it. We loved it that much, that I had the design permanently on my wrist, which now serves as a nice memory of a sad time.

You just never know when someone that you love might need the kind of care that Mum needed. We were just so lucky that this incredible hospice is in our area and that's why I promised myself once Mum passed away, that I would do something to give back to the hospice as a token of our appreciation and gratitude.

Mum passed away peacefully and was in no pain. We will never forget it and will be forever grateful. The hospice has been there for us during the time Mum was a patient, but afterwards too. I am accessing bereavement support, which Mum also received after we lost Dad. It made a big difference for her to have someone to speak to who had been in the similar situation."

*To date, Michelle, her brother Stephen and with family and friends, have raised just under **£1,500** for Willowbrook through fundraising and donations, and are continuing to fundraise! This is a fantastic amount, it is thanks to our incredible supporters like Michelle and Stephen that we are able to continue to provide our first class care.*



Meet a nurse

Meet Senior Staff Nurse, Lauren. Lauren has signed up to do a Skydive in aid of Willowbrook Hospice to help raise some much needed funds. Here is her story:

"I have worked for Willowbrook Hospice for seven years. During my training, I spent some time as a student on placement at Willowbrook, which I think is where my passion for working in palliative care started. When I qualified, I worked at Whiston Hospital and was often allocated palliative care patients. I really felt I was making a difference and my desire for caring for patients who needed palliative, and end of life care grew, so when the position came up at Willowbrook, I jumped at the opportunity.

We have no typical days on the ward – every day is different as our patients will all have individualised routines that we accommodate. I take charge of shifts, attend ward rounds and cascade communication to my colleagues. I administer medicine and I provide support to my patients and their families.

I can honestly say I love my job. I am incredibly lucky to work alongside such a fantastic team. We work very closely together and always help one another when needed.

Across the hospice, we look at each patient with a holistic perspective. We don't only treat their physical symptoms, but we also look at each patients' needs, hopes and goals to see what we can do to help improve their life – this could be from offering the use of a device to help them 'taste' when they are unable to physically swallow food and drink, to bringing the outdoors in and potting some plants from their room.

We truly care about every patient that come through our doors.

A lot of comments we hear on the ward is "We didn't know this service was here". We are unique in the care that we



Lauren's Skydive.



provide and are so proud of the level of care that we can give. It is phenomenal given how little we receive in funding, how much we can support our community. We support families of our patients for as long as they need it, no matter how long ago they accessed our service.

Since working at Willowbrook, I see life from a different perspective. Our patients will often speak fondly of their memories, not usually about a car they drove or clothes they wore, but their life experiences, love they have found or lost along the way and their family/friends who they have shared their lives with.

These experiences last, long after we do and although the Skydive has been a massive push out of my comfort zone, I am looking forward to the challenge and how I will look back on the experience for years to come.

I would love to meet my target of £1,000. I fully understand how much is needed to fund our hospice. It is heart-warming to see family members and friends coming together after a family member has received care from us, and how they have raised money as a way of saying thank you.

Whether it be from funeral collections, an event they attend, visiting our hospice shops or simply to support our service, the community backing that follows is incredible. We are truly grateful.

One of the main challenges I think we are faced with, is how there is a lack of knowledge around what palliative care is, and the work that a hospice can do therefore I hope my Skydive will shed some light on this too."

Hospice renovation

In our last newsletter, we shared news about plans for our hospice to have a much needed facelift! We are absolutely thrilled that after months of renovations, all the hard work has come together, and we can now reveal the transformation!

We now have ten high quality single bedrooms which all have ensembles and individual access to a terrace so patients can enjoy the outdoors even if they are unable to leave their bed.

We are really proud of our refreshed hospice, it wouldn't have been possible without the community support in making this all happen. We are very fortunate to now have a beautiful setting for those who require specialist palliative care and holistic services to patients and their families.



Making wishes come true

At Willowbrook Hospice, we pride ourselves on being a place that doesn't just care for a person's physical needs but also for their emotional and social needs too.

We wanted to fulfil our patient Julie's wish, to kiss a donkey. Fiona the donkey visited Julie at our hospice where she received our specialist care.

Fiona not only brought joy to Julie but also to our staff, visitors and other patients.

Heartfelt thanks to Alwood Donkeys and our staff for all the effort they went to, to grant Julie's wish. We also appreciate the continued community support as without that, we could not continue to provide free exceptional palliative care to all in our community who needs it!



New Horizons

When a Willowbrook patient has died, we will support their family until they no longer need us. We understand that grief and loss is a very individual experience, it's personal, emotive and affects everyone differently. We offer one-to-one sessions as well as group meetings for a six week period. We provide this care through our dedicated Bereavement Service led by our Family Liaison, Helen Heeny.

Following one of the six week groups, some members felt that they wanted to continue to meet. Peter said, "I said to the others that I didn't know what I would do when this group finishes...they all felt the same, so we now have a social group, known as New Horizons! We meet every four weeks, we have tea, toast and put the world to rights! We will go out for meals or have a trip to the theatre. I would be lost without them."

The group, which continues to grow in numbers, is supported by our Bereavement volunteer Steve Clarke and has a fairly even mix of men and women who have been widowed. Anyone who has accessed our bereavement support, whether it is the group or the one-to-one support, can come along to New Horizons.

They set up a WhatsApp group called 'Cheery Chums' which has been a saviour to them all. On days when they are not feeling too good, someone will be there to respond, someone they know will immediately understand what they are going through. The group has become a lifeline to them.

One member said: "Meeting up with people, in person is so important to be able to heal. Without this group, I felt incredibly

Our New Horizons group.



lonely, and sad. Being part of this group, means we can keep checking in on one another. If we are having a bad day, we can talk about it, share our thoughts, and before we know it, we are laughing. I never thought I would laugh again."

This group is simply one of a kind – there is no other group like this available to access in this area! This kind community comes with light hearted banter, a shoulder to cry on, and is a group with mutual understanding. It means so much to everyone who attends. This is what makes our hospice so unique, it enables our hospice team to go that extra mile and to offer the care that no other service is able to do.

Some of the members have gone on to become registered volunteers – one helps out with admin, one helps with a patient wellness group in our Outreach Service and another helps out in one of our shops. They wanted to give back to Willowbrook after receiving so much support when they needed us the most.

Linda said: "I have been so overwhelmed with the care I have received since my husband died at Willowbrook. They have been so amazing to me, and I tell people, they didn't have to do that. Their job was to look after my husband when he was a patient, but they have continued to still care. And I will always be grateful! I thought, I have this free time, so why not put it to good use?! I love Willowbrook, it is a big part of my life now."

Volunteering and me



Jackie Guinness

Jackie Guinness has volunteered for the Living Well Café at Willowbrook since March 2023. Here is her story...

"My friend is a volunteer here and says she really enjoys it. I retired last year from the Police so I had some free time which I wanted to use to do something meaningful.

Willowbrook Hospice means a lot to me, and the area I live in. I have no personal connection to the hospice but I have a lot of friends who do. I have always supported the hospice over the years by donating my

unwanted items. I give up a few hours each week which isn't a lot, but I feel I am giving back to the community. I really recommend it to anyone who has time to spare to do the same!"

Volunteers needed!

We need volunteers in all our retail shops, online shops and The Living Well Café! We also have other opportunities that might be of interest to you. Click the link button or visit www.willowbrook.org.uk/volunteer

CLICK
HERE

Events round up

Glitter Ball

In October, we held our Strictly Glitter Ball, which raised a whopping **£24,000** in total! £11,000 of this was down to sponsorship raised by our contestants who took part. Well done to everyone involved. "FAB-U-LOUS!!"



Heather Small Concert

In December, we hosted a very intimate concert at Prescot Parish Church, with live performances from Heather Small – The Voice of M People, Tom Loughlin – Classical Tenor Male Vocalist and Olivia Parr Music to raise an incredible **£10,000!**



Light Up A Life

Our first Light Up a Life service in our hospice gardens was a fantastic success. It was a beautiful way to remember loved ones who are no longer here. We invited families and supporters to come along to dedicate a light to their loved one on our tree, and had some local stalls selling handmade items. **£18,544** was raised in total from the service and through our Book of Honour dedications.

Comedy Night

A night of laughter is just what the doctor ordered! Our comedy nights are always a sell out, raising just under **£4,000!**

Christmas Tree Recycling

Thank you to everyone who arranged for us to collect and recycle your real Christmas trees, together our community raised almost **£13,000!**

Fabulous fundraisers

January

On **Rosie's** 12th birthday, she visited The Living Well to donate **£366!** Rosie sold handmade jewellery to raise funds for Willowbrook. This is an absolutely amazing achievement and one that Rosie chose to do off her own back. We think you'll agree this makes it a very selfless act. Rosie also did this to show love and support for her young friend and neighbour, whose mum was cared for at Willowbrook Hospice last year.

ITV Granada's Paul Crone (right) was a speaker at the event, guests were able to take part in a raffle and auction with some fabulous prizes which were donated – special thanks to the businesses and organisations who contributed or sponsored the luncheon and helped to raise an incredible **£10,460** – **Key Lettings, Frodshams Solicitors, Grundy & Co Excavations** and **Taylor Wimpey**.



We are really grateful to John and Les from **Glen Dimplex** for coming into The Living Well with a fantastic donation of **£1,000**. They also donated some brand new kettles and bread makers that will be sold in our new Kirkby shop. Thank you for your generosity! We are so thankful to organisations like Glen Dimplex for thinking of Willowbrook. Donations like this allows us to continue to provide hospice care for the community, 24/7.

February

Kevin Cunningham, an avid Rugby League fan, set himself a challenge, to re-watch every single Saints match from last season, whilst riding his turbo bike, to raise funds for three charities – Willowbrook Hospice, State of Mind Sport and The Steve Prescott Foundation. This challenge meant turbo riding for nearly 1,000 miles in total, and managed to raise an astonishing **£3,030** which was split between his three chosen charities. We would like to thank Kev for all that he has done for these three worthy causes, we are really grateful he has chosen to support our hospice.



April

Special thanks to **NPH Fitness** for raising the roof off Rainhill Village hall with their **Glow for Willow** three hour dance class, and raising **£6,000** for Willowbrook! Thank you so much to everyone who took part and collected sponsorship.



Running the **London Marathon** for Willowbrook is a massive achievement – and we were fortunate to have two supporters who have raised over **£2,000** between them. Well done to **Phil** (above) and **Becky!**



Shops news

New Kirkby shop

We were delighted to open the doors to our new **Willowbrook Fashion and Home store in Kirkby on 30th April!** The store is unique in the area for being the **only charity retailer stocking furniture**.



The new store was officially opened by the Mayor of Knowsley with visitors and customers entertained by local Ukelele band, Centre 63 Ukes.

This new store is our tenth retail branch, we are pleased to welcome our manager Lee Thompson who has previously managed our Billingie shop, so fully understands the Willowbrook ethos.

Thank you to everyone involved in making this new shop opening happen!

Furniture appeal

We are short on furniture to sell in our shops. If you are updating your home, please consider donating any unwanted furniture to us. We can also collect large items of furniture from you – absolutely free! Please click the button above or visit willowbrook.org.uk/book-a-collection to book.

CLICK HERE

Our collection stores are always able to help, please give them a call:
St Mary's 01744 417069
Sutton 01744 413112
Prescot 0151 541 7806

Willowbrook Shops

ST MARY'S ARCADE

St Mary's Arcade, Unit 19-20, Church Street, St Helens, WA10 1AR
 Mon to Sat 10am-4pm
 ☎ 01744 417069

SUTTON SHOP & DONATION WAREHOUSE

Sutton Road, St Helens, WA9 3DZ
 Mon to Sat 9:30am-3:30pm
 ☎ 01744 413112

PRESCOT SUPERSTORE

Prescot Shopping Centre, Eccleston Street, Prescot, L34 5GA
 Mon to Sat 10am-4pm
 ☎ 0151 541 7806

THE LIVING WELL

Borough Road, St Helens, WA10 3RN
 Mon to Sat 10am-4pm
 ☎ 01744 646830

RAINHILL

9 Dane Court, Weaver Ave., Rainhill, Prescot, L35 4LU
 Mon to Sat 9am-4pm
 ☎ 0151 426 9940

KIRKBY FASHION & HOME

Unit 9, Telegraph Way, Kirkby, L32 8US
 Mon to Sat 9am-4pm
 ☎ 0151 459 3533

STOCKBRIDGE VILLAGE

12 The Croft, Stockbridge Village, Knowsley, L28 1NR
 Mon to Fri 9am-4pm
 ☎ 0151 480 9796

FOUR ACRE

Unit 8, Four Acre Lane, Shopping Centre, St Helens, WA9 4BZ
 Mon to Sat 9am-4pm
 ☎ 01744 814121

RAINFORD

16a Church Road, Rainford, St Helens, WA11 8HE
 Mon to Sat 10am-4pm
 ☎ 01744 886829

BILLINGE

216-218 Main Street, Billingie, WN5 7PE
 Mon to Sat 10am-4pm
 ☎ 01744 893782

Please call us using the contact numbers or email shops@wbhtrading.co.uk

All opening times are subject to change without prior notice and closure due to public holidays.

Corporate and community news

Corporate and Community Fundraising is a great way for businesses to support charities whilst also fulfilling their corporate responsibility. Here are some fantastic companies who have chosen to support Willowbrook Hospice.

HOUGHWOOD GOLF CLUB

The captains of Houghwood Golf Club both wanted to support the same charity. They chose Willowbrook as many of their members at Houghwood have family and friends that have benefited from the care, expertise and kindness that Willowbrook provides.



Thank you to Fran Carrington, Lady Captain, and Captain Billy Wright! We are really grateful!

CHAPELHOUSE MOTOR GROUP

Huge thanks to Chapelhouse Motor Group/Chapel House St. Helens who very generously donated **£5,000** to Willowbrook Hospice.



Click the button for our latest events or how to plan your own

CLICK HERE

Towards the end of last year, they asked their customers to choose who should receive some of the **£40,000** they had in their charity fund.

Our amazing community chose Willowbrook Hospice and we are delighted to be one of eight charities across the North West to have been selected.

OLYMPIC FOODS

We are extremely grateful to Olympic Foods for very generously choosing Willowbrook Hospice as their Charity of the Year. They have pledged to make a regular monthly donation to our hospice. Tariq Ghani, Director of Olympic Foods regularly chooses charities and organisations to help make a positive impact and to support those in need. This is really a true act of kindness! Willowbrook's Head of Fundraising, Suzanne Davies, with Tariq Ghani are pictured below.



RAINHILL GALA

Once again, the Rainhill Gala committee has picked Willowbrook as the charity to benefit from funds raised for their annual event which is always so well attended!

You can find Willowbrook Hospice on LinkedIn.



M&S PRESCOT

Thank you to M&S Prescott for choosing Willowbrook Hospice as their charity of the year. For the year ahead, all the fundraising they will do in their branch will go directly to Willowbrook. This is a really thoughtful and kind way to support your community!



GRANGE PARK GOLF CLUB

Robert Hale, pictured below, Captain of Grange Park Golf Club, has chosen Willowbrook Hospice as his nominated charity of the year! Robert said: "All the members of the Golf Club are very pleased to try and help raise financial support for the year ahead in my captaincy. My target is **£6,000** and really hope that this time next year I can hand this amount over to Willowbrook."



Without the support of our local community, we would be lost! Here are some examples of the very kind and generous people who have provided incredible support to our hospice.

SAINTS RLFC

We are absolutely delighted to working in joint partnership with St Helens RLFC and Totally Wicked UK. The 2024 Junior Home Shirt, proudly displays our logo (and also on the players' away shirt for the Catalans Dragons match). This support is truly wonderful!

FC WILLOWBROOK

FC Willowbrook was founded in 2023 by Willowbrook Champion Luke Grounds. The idea of Willowbrook having its own football team grew from a charity football match that Luke helped to organise, in memory of his Dad, who was cared for by Willowbrook.

Thank you to our team sponsors – **Avocet Materials Group, Smith Contract Services, Real 5 and Change Recruitment.** Their next matches are 27th July vs Parkdale, and 8th September vs Northwest Community Stars!



Meet Bev!

We have a dedicated member of staff to help support anyone who is wanting to help with community fundraising. Drop Bev a message if you are thinking about fundraising for Willowbrook, whether you are an individual, team or workplace, she would love to hear from you!
Email: beverleyn@willowbrookhospice.org.uk
or phone **01744 453798**.



Win £1000 every week!



Willowbrook Hospice
LOTTERY



The lottery is a regular source of income to run our hospice services which deliver exceptional care for Willowbrook's patients and families. Over the past 25 years our lottery has raised over £12m and we have given away over £3.6m in prizes to our wonderful members. So why not become a member and give your support to Willowbrook and maybe get something in return? If you are already a lottery member, why not take out another number and double your chances of winning, or you could pass this form to a family member or friend to join?



Joining the lottery costs just **£1 per week** and is a great way to show your support for local people with life-limiting illnesses... *Simply, fill in the form in below and return it, visit www.willowbrook.org.uk or click the link above.*



Hospice Lottery Entry Form

I wish to become a member of the Willowbrook Hospice Lottery and I am over the age of 18.

Mr Mrs Miss Ms Other (please tick)

Name

Address

Postcode

Contact number

Email

I confirm I am 18 years old or older

How did you hear about the Lottery? (please tick)

Newsletter Website Facebook/Twitter Press

Willowbrook shop (please state which store)

Business (please state)

Other (please state)

I wish to join the Hospice Lottery and agree to make my payment via direct debit.

You may cancel your membership at any time.

Signed

Date

Please return this form to:

Fundraising Team, Willowbrook – The Living Well, Borough Road, St Helens, WA10 3RN

Registered with The Gambling Commission. Lottery promoted by Willowbrook Hospice Trading Company Ltd. All proceeds donated by Deed of Covenant to Willowbrook Hospice which is a Registered Charity No. 1020240. Promoter: Alun Owen, Willowbrook Hospice, Portico Lane, Prescot, Merseyside, L34 2QT.

Terms and conditions are available on the hospice website www.willowbrook.org.uk

Please gamble responsibly, for more information visit www.begambleaware.org

Marketing declaration:

We would like to keep in touch with you about future events and campaigns. If you would prefer to not be contacted please tick this box.

You can opt out of this or change your contact preferences at any time by calling us on 01744 453798 or email lottery@willowbrookhospice.org.uk * To read our data privacy policy please visit www.willowbrook.org.uk/privacy-policy-2 * If you no longer wish to hear from Willowbrook Hospice at all, please call us on 01744 453798 or email lottery@willowbrookhospice.org.uk

DIRECT DEBIT INFORMATION



Name and full postal address of your bank or building society.

To: The Manager	Bank/building society
Address	
Postcode	

Name(s) of account holder(s)

Bank/building society account number

Branch sort code

Service user number

Reference

Instruction to your bank or building society:

Please pay Willowbrook Hospice Direct Debits from the account detailed in this Instruction subject to the safeguards assured by the Direct Debit Guarantee. I understand that this Instruction may remain with Willowbrook Hospice and, if so, details will be passed electronically to my bank/building society.

Every four weeks £4 Quarterly £13
Half Yearly £26 Annually £52

The Direct Debit Guarantee: This Guarantee is offered by all banks and building societies that accept instructions to pay Direct Debits. If there are any changes to the amount, date or frequency of your Direct Debit, Willowbrook Hospice will notify you 10 working days in advance of your account being debited or as otherwise agreed. If you request Willowbrook Hospice to collect payment, confirmation of the amount and date will be given to you at the time of request. If an error is made in the payment of your Direct Debit, by Willowbrook Hospice or your bank or building society you are entitled to a full and immediate refund to the amount paid from your bank or building society. If you receive a refund you are not entitled to, you must pay it back when Willowbrook Hospice asks you to. You can cancel a Direct Debit at any time by simply contacting your bank or building society. Written confirmation may be required. Please notify us.