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# Together we are Willowbrook

Your local hospice newsletter

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SPRING/SUMMER 2025

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### Highlights inside...

- Read about why Becky chose to run the London Marathon for Willowbrook
- Hear about some fantastic fundraising from our wonderful community
- See how you can be involved
- Meet our new members of the Volunteer Hub



Call the Fundraising Office on **01744 453798**  
or e-mail [events@willowbrookhospice.org.uk](mailto:events@willowbrookhospice.org.uk)

[www.willowbrook.org.uk](http://www.willowbrook.org.uk)



# Welcome...

## Welcome to the latest edition of our Willowbrook Newsletter.

As spring has arrived, we're excited about the brighter days ahead. Whilst we continue to face significant financial challenges, we should acknowledge that the government recently made additional funds available to hospices across the country. As part of this, our hospice recently received a 'one-off' payment of £99,908 towards this year's running costs.

Whilst we are incredibly grateful to have received this, it will only keep our doors open for around 10 days. To maintain our vital, specialist care services, we still very much need our community's help to support us in reach our £4.3m goal required to operate Willowbrook for the next year.

We're proud to have supported even more patients and their families this year and like us,

many of their friends are excited about the full calendar of fundraising events and challenges ahead – opportunities for everyone in our community to get involved. With your support through attending our events, holding your own challenges, using our shops and joining our lottery, you will enable Willowbrook Hospice to continue providing its exceptional and outstanding care to patients with life-limiting illnesses in St Helens and Knowsley.

On behalf of everyone at Willowbrook Hospice, thank you for your ongoing support. Together, we are Willowbrook.

Lynda  
and Paula  
Executive  
Leadership  
Team



Lynda Finney (left) and Paula Powell (right).

Click the button  
for more details  
about Legacies

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## Legacy story: Irene Wills

**Irene Wills is a volunteer at Willowbrook Hospice. Not only does she support us with giving us her time, but she is also remembering Willowbrook in her Will.**

"My husband was a patient at the hospice for five days before he sadly passed away, in 2015. The way he was looked after by the staff was marvellous. They not only looked after my husband, but they took care of me too. They were really supportive after he passed away also.

It was after the loss of my husband that I had a bit of a light bulb moment, and it made me wonder what would I do with my house if anything was to happen to me, as we have no children to pass it down to. It was then that I decided I would leave some of my estate to Willowbrook as a thank you for all that they did for us.



It was really straightforward to do, I went to a solicitor who helped me write my Will. I felt that it was the right thing to do, and would encourage anyone else in a similar position as me to do the same.

After a year of receiving bereavement counselling from Willowbrook, I decided to devote some time to volunteering for the hospice, and ever since then I have helped out at The Living Well reception doing one afternoon a week, and really enjoy it as it gets me out and about and I feel a sense of purpose."

We are so thankful for Irene's kindness and generosity – if you would like to leave Willowbrook some of your estate, you can find out more here:

[www.willowbrook.org.uk/gifts-in-wills](http://www.willowbrook.org.uk/gifts-in-wills)

Together with your support, we can protect the future of hospice care.

# Supporter story: Becky Frazer

## Becky Frazer recounts the story of the dedicated and compassionate care her father Steve received at 'extraordinary' Willowbrook Hospice.

**In January 2022, my dad Steve was diagnosed with terminal throat cancer. For the next 14 months he went through a brave and gruelling fight with the disease until he passed away on 30th March 2023, just 3 days after his 65th birthday.**

As he approached his end of life, we cared for him at home with the support of an incredible team of district nurses, however towards his final weeks this sadly became unsustainable. My eldest brother Tom has autism alongside other learning disabilities, and so seeing the deterioration of his dad's health became increasingly challenging and distressing for him due to the combination of the increased level of care required, the constant changes in routine and amount of uncertainty in what each day would bring.

Our Macmillan nurse then secured dad a place at Willowbrook Hospice, which is where he spent his final two weeks.

As an organisation they are nothing short of extraordinary, and I don't think our family can ever show the true level of gratitude we have for them. They don't just care for the individual, but the entire family. I can remember sitting reading a book in preparation for our upcoming arrival in Dad's room and finally feeling so calm and at peace, knowing he was getting the care, support and love he needed from both them and us. They went above and beyond to make the hospice feel like home, from showing every Saints game on his TV, to letting him open a beer and give cheers on his birthday.

I'll never forget the kindness they extended to us all, from Alex the Health Care Assistant who made me crumpets at 2am (I was 8 months pregnant and starving!) to the most genuine and heartfelt hug Nurse Emma gave me once dad had passed. They truly act as an extension of your own family with the level of love, care and



Becky pictured with her much-loved father Steve.

compassion they give to both those in their care and their loved ones.

When we said our final goodbyes, I remember Emma saying: "It is such a privilege to care for them" and I think this is shown in every single interaction they have with all who cross their path.

I ran this year's London Marathon and raised **£2,700** for Willowbrook so that I can help extended their support to another family like ours.

In memory of those who came before us, and the many who they continue to care for after us – we thank you.

## London Marathon EXCLUSIVE!

Are you ready to take on the ultimate challenge while making a meaningful difference? Willowbrook Hospice is excited to offer **two exclusive places** for the 2026 London Marathon, and we're inviting you to apply today! **Click the button** shown above for more details.

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## Meet a nurse: Neil Sutcliffe

Neil Sutcliffe tells us about over a quarter of a century working at Willowbrook and how his passion for care provides moments of reflection.

I am a Senior Staff Nurse and Lead Dementia Nurse at Willowbrook Hospice. I have had the privilege of working here for 27 years, since our Inpatient unit first opened its doors in 1998. Over the years, I have witnessed the many positive changes at Willowbrook, all of which have contributed to our mission of delivering the very best care with compassion to our community. It has always been our belief that every contact counts.

I am deeply passionate about providing high-quality palliative care, especially when it comes to supporting patients in end-of-life care and managing their symptoms on the Inpatient Unit. I consider it an honour to be part of such an important and impactful service.

Throughout my time here, I've had the opportunity to be involved in various fundraising efforts for the hospice, and one of my fondest memories was taking part in the first-ever Willowbrook Hospice Strictly Glitter Ball back in 2018. I danced the American Smooth to "Singin' in the Rain" and was thrilled to score a perfect 10 from the judges!

There have also been moments of deep personal reflection. I'll never forget one

particular patient I cared for who had an advanced care plan that detailed where they wished to spend their final days.

I worked closely with the patient's family and healthcare team, including a Hospice in Windsor, to ensure their wishes were honoured. I co-ordinated everything from the ambulance transfer to providing detailed care documentation, managing their symptoms during the journey, and ensuring a smooth transition for the patient and their family. Thanks to the care provided, the patient was able to spend three peaceful weeks with loved ones before passing away.

### My charity Skydive for Willowbrook!

"This year, my colleague Ann Horan and I will be taking on a new challenge to raise funds for Willowbrook Hospice. In August, we'll be doing a skydive to support the vital care we provide. We hope to raise significant funds to help ensure that the hospice continues to provide excellent care for our community for many years to come.

Please **click the button** below to donate – every pound helps motivate me to jump for Willowbrook... please support me!"

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## Hospice Lottery

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We introduced our new Lottery Sales Lead, Jane in the last edition of the newsletter. Since then, Jane has been busy going out and about meeting our lottery winners! Jane said: "I am really enjoying my role, I love meeting the worthy winners who all say how much they are glad to support our hospice. It is inspiring speaking to the community and hearing why they choose to play our lottery. The contributions really do make a difference".

Mike from St Helens Flooring is pictured with some of our winners.



Paul Markey won £1,000.



Miss Gardner with her 'grand' first prize.



Lyndsey Turner-Jones (above) scooped £1,000.



Mr Cardwell won £1,000 with an extra £400 rollover.

### PLAY, WIN, SUPPORT!

When you are a valued member of the Willowbrook Lottery, your ongoing support enables us to provide essential care and helps cover the running costs of the hospice. There are 84 cash prizes to be won each week with a rollover prize that can reach up to **£10,000**. Why not take out a second weekly number and double your support? This will increase your chances of winning as well as helping us achieve our fundraising target!

Please **click the button** to sign up for the Lottery or call us on **01744 453798**.

You must be 18 and over to play.

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# Volunteering news

We are pleased to welcome to new members to the Volunteering team! Emma Rhoden and Diane Tabern both started in March, here we find out a bit more about them and their roles.

## Emma Rhoden

I am the new Assistant Head of Volunteering at Willowbrook. I come with a background working with volunteers and part of the fundraising committee for the Marie Curie Hospice in Woolton, Liverpool. In a past life I was in Education where I was responsible for co-ordinating volunteers to work with children and help raise school funds.

Born and bred in St Helens, my family have supported Willowbrook since its inception as my dad was on the very first steering committee. Close family and dear friends have been privileged to receive wonderful palliative care both at home and in the hospice which has fuelled my passion further to work for Willowbrook.

I am a keen walker and love to travel using our camper van. I am a bit of a foodie and love to bake and eat cake. I am honoured and really excited to work with Ian alongside so many wonderful volunteers.

Emma (left) with Diane.



## Diane Tabern

My professional background is in finance, and eventually became a mortgage adviser for 25 years before I left in December 2024.

My Dad was an inpatient at Willowbrook prior to his death in 2012, I have supported the hospice by attending events or doing the lottery, so working for a charity so close to my heart was meant to be.

I am married to Nick and have a Disney-obsessed daughter (who now works for Disney Cruise Lines) and also a Jack Russell called Bumble. I am also chair of a local park Friends Group. I make my own flavoured gins!

What I am most looking forward to is getting to meet more members of the local community, seeing the difference in someone between when they first arrive at a Chatty Café to when they leave – how could you not love a job where you get to make that kind of difference?

## Volunteers needed!

Could you give up some time to do some volunteering? We have a number of opportunities that might be of interest to you. **Click the button** or visit [www.willowbrook.org.uk/volunteer](http://www.willowbrook.org.uk/volunteer)

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# Fundraising events

Click the button for our latest events

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## Moonlight Walk 2024

Our walkers raised **£12,000** and it was a special one as it was the first one back on the roads since the pandemic. Thank you to Britannia Taxis and to all the fantastic support we had in making the night happen.



## Strictly Glitter Ball 2024

An extraordinary **£48,288** in total was raised at our Strictly Glitter Ball! £17,930 of this was down to sponsorship raised by our contestants and the 'People's Vote' on the night. This total exceeds the amount raised in 2023.



## Light Up A Life

In December, we welcomed our local community to gather around our Christmas tree at the hospice to remember a loved one. We invited everyone to hang a wooden star on the tree with a message, and they could also view dedications in our Book of Honour. This special night along with the dedications raised a magnificent **£20,000**.



## Comedy Night

We hosted our annual Comedy Night in February and together we have raised a magnificent **£2,625** for Willowbrook Hospice. This event was made possible through sponsorship from a very generous and kind supporter whose family member was looked after by our hospice team.

## St Patrick's Day Singalong Bingo

Our Singalong Bingo nights are always a sell-out, and our Irish themed St Patrick's Day event was a huge success. With the help of Gary Ward, from We Help Recruit (and also a Willowbrook Hospice Trustee), as our resident bingo caller the night raised a fantastic **£1,546!**



## Christmas Tree Recycling

Our annual Christmas Tree recycling campaign in partnership with Just Helping raised an incredible **£12,000!** This was £2,000 more than in 2024, we are absolutely thrilled, and so grateful to everyone who helped make this all happen.



# Enormous Thanks

## to our Fabulous Fundraisers!

**Thank YOU** for all the incredible things that you do to support Willowbrook Hospice. We are so grateful to each and every single person who gives up their time, money and energy to support us. We are thankful to have such a supportive community. Across these pages you will see a small snippet of the fabulous fundraising we have seen – we share news regularly on our socials so please make sure you are following us!

The **Sutton Academy** raised **£150** at their presentation evening. Former Premier League referee Chris Foy, was the Guest Speaker and asked for a donation to Willowbrook in recognition of his participation.

Huge congratulations to **Janine** for running the Manchester Half Marathon and raising **£586!**



A huge thank you to **James Long** for his incredible fundraising efforts in celebration of his 45th birthday raising an incredible **£3,233.75!**

Well done to **Lee, Sue, Sonya, Aaron** and **Shenice** who walked up Snowdon to raise **£1,882.**



Thank you to **M&S Prescott** for kindly allowing us to do bucket collections in December and March. Thanks to the customers who generously donated over an incredible total of **£5,000!**



Thank you so much to the committee members at **Burtonwood Community Centre** who made a very kind and generous donation of **£2,100** following their annual Beer Festival. They also added **£745** later on in March following a raffle.

Thank you to **The Boars Head** for their very wonderful donation following their annual two day event 'BoarsFest' which took place at the end of August with a total of **£1,610** raised.



**Andrew Wood** is a local driving instructor, who has donated over **£5,000** since 2017. For all students that come to him to learn to drive, he donates their very first fee to Willowbrook.

Thank you to **Michelle Mutch** for organising an amazing raffle and a darts night, raising a fabulous **£500!**



A huge shout out to three incredible young fundraisers – **Lilah, Isabella,** and **Alex** – from St. John Vianney Catholic Primary School. These amazing pupils organised a tombola to raise **£200.**



Huge congratulations to **Ruby** for raising a whopping **£2001.01** by running a mile a day throughout January. What an incredible achievement, her dedication and efforts are truly inspiring!

A massive thank you to the wonderful **Widnes Ice Skating Club** for their incredible support at their recent gala to raise an amazing **£1,500!**



Huge congratulations to our very own **Dr Debby** who took part in the Athens Marathon, raising **£910!**



We were so pleased to see five Willowbrook supporters running at the St Helens 10k for our hospice, raising a total of **£2,500** between them! Thank you to **Ewan, Jack, Deryck, Lee** and **Natalie.**

Well done to **Catherine** and **John Coughlin** for raising **£1,400** after hosting a Grand National fundraiser! Here they are presenting their cheque to Suzanne Davies, Head of Fundraising at Willowbrook Hospice.



'Be in a Show' raised a fabulous **£2,000** from holding raffles at their performances!



Click the button below for help on your fundraising journey for Willowbrook.

**CLICK HERE**

## Shops news

### £10 Sale success story

We held our very first **£10 Sale** event at The Living Well Marquee in October 2024 which was an incredible success, raising an incredible **£1,000** followed by another sale in April 2025, bringing in **£1,200** in just a few hours.

As you can see from the photos, our marquee was filled with bargain hunters.



### Willowbrook Shops

#### BILLINGE

216-218 Main Street,  
WN5 7PE ☎ 01744 893782

#### FOUR ACRE

Unit 8, Four Acre Lane,  
WA9 4BZ ☎ 01744 814121

#### KIRKBY

Unit 9, Telegraph Way,  
L32 8US ☎ 01551 459 3533

#### PRESCOT

Prescot Shopping Centre,  
L34 5GA ☎ 0151 541 7806

#### RAINFORD

16a Church Road, WA11 8HE  
☎ 01744 886829

#### RAINHILL

9 Dane Court, L35 4LU  
☎ 0151 426 9940

#### ST MARY'S ARCADE

St Mary's Arcade, WA10 1AR  
☎ 01744 417069

#### STOCKBRIDGE VILLAGE

12 The Croft, L28 1NR  
☎ 0151 480 9796

#### SUTTON SHOP & DONATION WAREHOUSE

Sutton Road, WA9 3DZ  
☎ 01744 413112

#### THE LIVING WELL

Borough Road, WA10 3RN  
☎ 01744 646830

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for full addresses and opening times.

## Saints support

In March, we welcomed St Helens RLFC players **Joe Batchelor** and **Kyle Feldt** to our Living Well shop with some fabulous donations from their kit supplier, O'Neills. The team have been hugely supportive of our appeal for more men's clothing, inviting us to the Totally Wicked Stadium to have a drop-off point for donations of clothing and to do bucket collections.



### Furniture Appeal: We need your items!

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 scan the QR code above or visit our website [www.willowbrook.org.uk](http://www.willowbrook.org.uk) to book. 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**

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## Corporate news

We are grateful to local businesses who support the hospice by raising funds and awareness. Click the logo to find us on LinkedIn.



Thank you to **Synyega** for their very generous donation of **£4,800** for Willowbrook through regular monthly donations since 2021.



We are really grateful to **Fusion 21** for their very kind and generous **£1,000** donation to Willowbrook. We are delighted to have been nominated by their staff to receive a donation.



A huge thank you to **PSD Vehicle Rental** for their generous donation of two Luton vans to support the daily operations at Willowbrook. These vehicles will play a vital role in transporting donations to our retail shops, ensuring we can keep our shelves stocked.



**Aalberts Hydronic Flow Control** raised **£300** following their regular fundraisers, from marathons, Born Survivor to Wimbledon Strawberries and Cream Tea afternoons.



We were pleased to see Sam and Anthony from **NSG Group** return with a fantastic donation of **£591.30** from the sale of their honey!



**Plumbase** raised **£1,000** through their customers making donations and a member of staff, Phil taking on Tough Mudder and the Three Peaks!



A massive thank you to **GPW Recruitment** for their incredible fundraising efforts, raising **£1,000!**



### BUSINESS BUDDIES

Willowbrook Business Buddies offers local businesses a chance to collaborate with Willowbrook Hospice and make a meaningful impact. To join, businesses set up a monthly donation ranging from £30 to £100. In return, members receive a personal tour of the hospice, a place on the 'Business Buddy Hero Wall,' and a certificate to display. They also gain access to quarterly networking meetings, exclusive event invitations, and fundraising challenges, perfect for team-building and visibility. Regular newsletters feature hospice updates and spotlight your business. This partnership supports a great cause, strengthens community connections and provides valuable exposure for your business.

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Following an auction for a match-worn shirt, the **Saints** were thrilled to donate **£3,285!**



# Leech

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