

Autumn/Winter 2025

www.willowbrook.org.uk

light Mp

SATURDAY 13TH DECEMBER 2025

ARRIVAL 3.30PM • SERVICE 4PM

WILLOWBROOK HOSPICE, PORTICO LANE, L34 2QT

Willowbrook NEWSLETTER

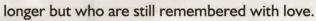






The Memory Tree

The Memory Tree is a simple and lasting tribute, be piece of art celebrating the lives of loved ones, with each leaf inscribed with a name of those who are with us no





Our beautiful Memory Tree will be placed in our hospice garden where visitors can take a moment to stop and remember their loved ones.

Each personalised copper leaf costs £200 for one year - this contribution will help Willowbrook to continue providing vital hospice care to the St Helens and Knowsley community.

SPONSORED BY



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WELCOME TO THE WINTER EDITION OF YOUR

Willowbrook **Newsletter**



As the nights draw in and the year comes to a close, we're reminded of the warmth and strength that comes from being part of such a caring community. Like hospices across the country, Willowbrook continues to face financial challenges, but with your support we are able to keep our doors open, offering support, compassion and expert care to local people and their families when

This season is about togetherness, and we are so grateful for the kindness, time and generosity that surround Willowbrook. In this newsletter you'll find stories of hope, updates on our services, and ways to get involved as we step into the new year together.

Paula Powell **Executive Medical Director**

Lynda Finney **Executive Clinical Director**



Registered charity no. 1020240









A PLACE OF LOVE, NOT JUST LOSS

Our Willowbrook Story

Not many people think about their local hospice - until they need it. But I wish everyone could spend a day at Willowbrook Hospice, to see what it's really about. It's not just a place associated with death or fundraising - it's a place full of life, care, and compassion.

My mum, Audrey, was a strong and resilient woman who fought cancer for five years. When things became too much at home, we turned to Willowbrook for care. What we found was far more than just medical support - we found a family.

From the moment Mum arrived, we were cared for in every possible way. Hazel welcomed her from the ambulance with a smile; Lisa offered her an ice lolly when she saw Mum struggling to swallow. That small act set the tone for everything that followed.

I moved in with Mum for six weeks and was struck by the kindness of everyone - nurses, doctors, kitchen staff, volunteers. Ged and the kitchen team were incredible, always offering to cook anything Mum wanted, and feeding Dad and me too.

Staff like Maggie, Carol, and Donna felt like friends, and they still greet us with hugs when we visit.

There were light-hearted moments too, like Wellbeing Days for staff and Volunteers with free ice cream - even for Mum and me.

The medical staff - Andrew, Josh, Kate, and so many others - respected Mum's wishes and treated her with dignity. The nurses - Vanessa, Carly, Julie, and many more - offered comfort and care, never just doing a job, but living a calling. Health Care Assistants like Eve, who helped me with knee rehab, Andre, who taught Mum French, and Alex, who shared his beautiful photography, went above and beyond.

There's so much more I could say, but what it comes down to is this: Willowbrook is a truly special place that most people don't know about until they need it. It's not where people go to die - it's where people live, work, and care for families in their hardest moments. Even now, if we walk through the doors, Karen still comes out of her office to give us a hug and ask if we need anything.

She once asked me to volunteer - if only I lived closer. For now, I support them however I can, as Mum did in her will. But financial support is just the tip of the iceberg. I'd hate for people to give without truly knowing how much good their donation does.

Andie Ridley

If you've never visited, go to a Willowbrook Hospice event, walk the gardens, meet the team. See for yourself how special this place is. Willowbrook is an oasis of calm, warmth, and kindness. And we'll forever be grateful.

MEET A HEALTHCARE ASSISTANT

Alicia McAteer

This year marks a decade since I first began my journey with the NHS. I started out working in surgical care, a place I truly loved, before moving into the Outpatient Department. After some time, I made the decision to step into the world of social care, working in a care home for two years where I completed my NVQ qualifications.

Life took a difficult turn when I lost my mum to throat cancer. During that time, I witnessed the compassionate care provided by Macmillan nurses and support staff. It inspired a thought: "I could do that." I spent a long time questioning myself, wondering if I was capable of following that path.

Then came a turning point - a dear friend of mine, who was a patient at Willowbrook, said something that stuck with me: "Chick, you'd be great here." When a job opened up, I applied, not thinking I'd be successful. But to my surprise, I was offered the role - and I can honestly say it's the best move I've ever made.

From the corporate and medical directors to my incredible managers Marg, Debbie, and Charlie - and the entire team - I've been blown away by the compassion, care, and professionalism that surrounds me daily. The support from everyone has been outstanding, and I'm especially grateful to lan Turnbull for looking after me so well during my training (and for all the cups of coffee!).

I feel truly blessed to be here. The level of care, dignity, and teamwork I witness every day is second to none. I come to work with a smile, knowing that if I ever need anything, someone will be there. The support we give one another makes this more than just a workplace - it's a family. I'm so lucky to be part of such an incredible team.





HOSPICE NEWS

Johnny Vegas PROUD PATRON OF WILLOWBROOK HOSPICE

Beloved comedian, actor, and St Helens native Johnny, known for his sharp wit and big heart, has a deeply personal connection to Willowbrook. It was here that his father, affectionately known as Lol, received compassionate end-of-life care.

That experience left a lasting impression on Johnny and his family, and he's now stepping forward to champion the work that we do, as we continue to support individuals and families across the community. Johnny was an obvious choice to be asked to be Patron of Willowbrook.

"Willowbrook was there for my Dad and for us as a family during one of the hardest times in our lives," Johnny said. "Their care was extraordinary, full of dignity, compassion and respect. Becoming a patron feels like the right way to say thank you, and to help ensure more families can receive the same incredible support."

Our Clinical Director, Lynda Finney, welcomed the announcement, saying: "We are absolutely delighted to have Johnny as a patron. His support means so much – not only because of his local roots and his humour, but because he truly understands the heart of Willowbrook. He's seen first hand the difference we make, and his passion for what we do is genuine."

As a patron, Johnny will hope to shine a spotlight on the work that we do, raise awareness of the vital services we provide, and support fundraising efforts that help keep Willowbrook's care, free for all who need it.

Practice Development Team delivers an Introduction to Palliative Care training

Our facilitators, Lauren Lloyd and Catherine Owens delivered training around End of Life care, holistic care, the importance of nutrition and mouthcare and much more, to all staff at the Parr Care Home.

Catherine said, "Lauren and I have truly enjoyed working closely with Parr, building strong relationships and tailoring the training to meet their specific needs. It's been fascinating to learn about the different ways care settings operate and the unique challenges they face. We've gained as much insight from them as they have from us!

This training course has been a trial, and moving forward, we hope to offer similar training to other nursing homes and care facilities. However, this can only happen with funding, allowing us to provide essential palliative care."





Our hospice kitchen has been awarded 5 stars!

Our kitchen recently had a food hygiene inspection from St Helens Council and we are proud to announce we have been awarded the 5-star rating.

This is the highest rating that can be achieved, and is down to the hard work and dedication that our catering, housekeeping and maintenance team put in to making this happen.

Volunteering

THANK YOU TO OUR **CORPORATE VOLUNTEERS!**

Corporate volunteers play a crucial role at Willowbrook Hospice by providing valuable skills and support, helping to expand care services and raise community awareness. Their involvement strengthens partnerships and boosts resources vital for compassionate end-of-life care.

We are immensely grateful to the following organisations who allowed members of their staff to come to Willowbrook for the day to offer support: St James's Place, Waterside Training, Tailored Financial Planning, DWP, Lloyds Bank and Agrekko Europe.



CHATTY CAFÉ

Since Diane Tabern joined us as our Chatty Café Coordinator earlier this year, our Chatty Cafés have blossomed and spread to even more local spots. These free, friendly gatherings are all about beating loneliness and bringing people together to share a chat and a smile.

Thanks to Diane, we're reaching more corners of the community, and each café has its own special vibe. Sometimes we're joined by guests from local groups or services, so there's always something new to enjoy and talk about. It's a great way to make friends, have fun, and feel part of something wonderful!





Find out when your next Chatty Café is: https://willowbrook.org.uk/chatty-cafe/



Would you like to offer your services to support Willowbrook? We would love to hear from you!

Email help@willowbrookhospice.org.uk

VOLUNTEERS AFTERNOON TEA

If you would like to give volunteering a try, we would love to hear from you!

Contact our Volunteer Hub on 01744 453798 or visit https://willowbrook.org.uk/volunteer/





VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Could you give up some time to do some volunteering?

www.willowbrook.org.uk/volunteer



Fundraising Events



SKY DIVES

A huge CONGRATULATIONS to our fearless fundraisers who completed their skydives in aid of Willowbrook Hospice! We are absolutely blown away by your courage and commitment – and even more amazed that together they raised £15,700!



GOLF DAY

Our annual golf day took place on the 6th May at the stunning Houghwood Golf and was yet another fantastic success, raising iust under £8.000! Grateful to all our wonderful supporters who helped make the day happen.



A massive WELL DONE to all our incredible supporters who braved the heights of the iconic **Liverpool** Cathedral for the Willowbrook Hospice Abseil! They were fearless, fabulous, and full of heart – and between them, raised over £5,500!



CANOE CHALLENGE

A huge thank you to everyone who took part in our very first Canoe Challenge - what an amazing day! The sun was shining, spirits were high, and thanks to the incredible efforts of those who took part, raised over £7,000! Special thanks to Paul and his crew from St Helens Canoe Club for their support, and to all the friends, families, and supporters who came along to cheer the participants on.



SINGALONG BINGO

Thank you to everyone who attended our Summer Singalong Bingo! Together we have raised £1,330 for Willowbrook Hospice! What a magnificent effort! Thank you Gary from We Help Recruit for being our bingo caller and DJ!

already raised £7,635. What a

COLOUR RUN

A HUGE thank you to everyone who took part in our St Helens Colour Run in partnership with St Helens Borough Council - what an absolutely fantastic turnout! 500 participants came together, laughed, ran, danced and got very colourful, all while raising a phenomenal £14,000+



SUNRISE ON SNOWDON

Huge congratulations to our amazing team of fundraisers who took on the incredible challenge of climbing Mount Snowdon in the early hours - all in the hope of catching a breathtaking sunrise while raising vital funds for Willowbrook.

Despite facing 40mph winds, torrential rain, and near-zero visibility, they showed incredible teamwork and determination to reach the summit by 4:20am! While the sunrise didn't make an appearance, the team still soaked in the incredible achievement - and raised a fantastic £8,275 in the process.

SUMMER OPEN GARDENS

We opened up our hospice gardens to host our annual Open Gardens event, and together, we have raised £1,596! We are grateful to Dylan's Reptile Time - Reptile & Creepy Crawly Experience for generously donating his time to attend. Thank you to our amazing gardening team of staff and and supported the day to make it all happen!





We are beyond thrilled to announce that this year's Willowbrook Hospice Moonlight Walk raised an incredible £13,745 so far - and we simply couldn't have done it without YOU, our amazing community! A huge thank you to everyone who joined us - from walkers and volunteers to sponsors and donors. We loved meeting so many of you and hearing heartfelt stories from families who have experienced our services firsthand. Your support truly means the world to us.



PLAY THE WILLOWBROOK HOSPICE LOTTERY

Support Local Care & Win Big!

Help local families get the care they deserve – and be in with a chance to win up to £10,000! Join the Willowbrook Hospice Lottery this autumn – it is the easiest way to make a big difference from just £1 a week

WHY PEOPLE LOVE IT

"I couldn't believe it when I won £1,000 – I play to support Willowbrook, but the win was a real bonus!" Lyndsey, Eccleston (Lottery Winner)

"Taking out a second play felt like an easy way to do a little more. Every bound really does help. Gail, Haydock (Supporter)

"Willowbrook was there when my mum needed them most – I will never stop supporting them." Sarah, Prescot (Family Member)

"I joined online in under 2 minutes – it is such an easy way to support a local charity." Becky, Billinge (New Player)





Ist Prize: £1,000

2nd Prize: £125

3rd Prize: **£75**

4th Prize: **£50**

■ PLUS a weekly rollover jackpot of up to £10,000!



PROUDIY SPONSORED BY



St. Helens Flooring









Fabulous Fundraisers



Special thanks to Stuart Pyke, sensation Luke Littler which



the epic Born Survivor challenge a phenomenal £1263.75



up with the **St Helens and** Warrington Oddfellows Friendly Society, who managed to raise £2,650



Huge well done to **Peter** (89), fearlessly took on the Liverpool Cathedral Abseil and raised an incredible £1.050! He chose Willowbrook because they cared for his stepson Michael six years ago before he sadly passed away.



Thank you to **Paul Delaney** for inviting Brookie Bear and some of our volunteers to the **St** Helens Poetry Buzz evening at the Totally Wicked Stadium to do some bucket collecting. Brookie loved meeting all the talented children who were selected to read their poems in front of an audience. Together, we raised £127.76 - thank you so much to all who made a donation!



WELL DONE to Tracy, **lenny**, and **Kirsty** who skydived to raise an incredible £3.300, what an amazing challenge was in memory of Tracy's lovely mum. Carole. a much-loved volunteer here at Willowbrook, who sadly passed away last year.



St Mary's Club and BOFFO raised £1,945.45 following a fundraising afternoon, raffles and an auction! In total over the last 10 years they have raised £10,000!



A Big Well Done to Alana-Rose! - At just 6 years old, Alana-Rose has already shown the most incredible compassion and creativity! She's been busy making beautiful bracelets and keyrings and has raised an amazing £530 for Willowbrook Hospice!



A huge thank you to **Garry** Pilkington, who took on a two-day walking challenge across Dartmoor in memory of his great friend, Mike who was lovingly cared for at Willowbrook. His dedication and determination have helped raise a phenomenal £1.791.25 for Willowbrook.

The Brown Edge held a two day festival and raised a phenomenal £4.154!

The Wheatsheaf managed to raise an incredible £2.916 at their Family Fun Day.

We were thrilled to meet Andrew Quirke, who generously donated £773.75 after completing the incredible challenge of walking Hadrian's Wall. Although Andrew has no personal connection to Willowbrook, he understands and supports the important work we do - and we couldn't be more grateful.

A huge thank you to Dave Bell for organising such a fantastic golf day to celebrate his 50th birthday. Not only was it a brilliant day enjoyed by all, but Dave's generosity and efforts helped raise an amazing £700 for Willowbrook Hospice!

Anthony Darbyshire has raised over £1,000 following the immensely challenging Lake Zurich Marathon Swim, in memory of his Mum who was well cared for at Willowbrook during the last three weeks of her life.

It was our absolute pleasure to visit **Prescot Primary** with Brookie Bear to thank them for raising a superb £755.35 from their Masked Racer event!

£1.100.50 raised for Willowbrook Hospice by the incredible team at The Boars Head following their two day BoarsFest!

Special thanks to Councillor Mark Burke, Mayor of Prescot and his wife Julie for visiting our hospice with a cheque for £1,000 from his Mayoral Fund.



Eleventh Willowbrook Shop Opening

On Thursday, 28th August, we were thrilled to open the doors to our very first specialist shop, Reloved by Willowbrook Hospice, right in the heart of the historic market town of Ormskirk. The shop offers a wonderful selection of books, DVDs, CDs, and jigsaws – truly something for everyone!

We are delighted to introduce Jamie Peterson as our Store Manager, who is already ably supported by a dedicated team of twelve enthusiastic volunteers. A heartfelt thank you goes to everyone who helped bring the shop to life, especially our maintenance team.

Our opening day was a joyful occasion, featuring live music from the fantastic UKES 63 ukulele band. and a surprise visit from our beloved Brookie

Bear. It was also wonderful to welcome so many Willowbrook colleagues and trustees who joined us in the celebrations.

The response from the Ormskirk community has been overwhelmingly positive, and we're truly grateful for the support and enthusiasm shown so far. If you're nearby, please do pop in to Reloved by Willowbrook Hospice – we're sure you'll find a bargain or two to take home!

Our Shops

SUTTON SHOP & DONATION ST MARY'S ARCADE WAREHOUSE

Sutton Road, St Helens, WA9 3DZ Monday to Saturday, 9:30am - 3:30pm 01744 413112

PRESCOT SUPERSTORE

Prescot Shopping Centre, Eccleston Street, Prescot, L34 5GA Monday to Saturday, 10am - 4pm

0151 541 7806

THE LIVING WELL

Borough Road, St Helens, Merseyside, WAI0 3RN Monday to Saturday, 10am - 4pm 01744 646830

THE LIVING WELL CAFÉ

Borough Road, St Helens, Merseyside, WAI0 3RN Monday to Saturday, 9am - 4pm 01744 646826

St Mary's Arcade, Unit 19-20, Church Street, St Helens, WA10 IAR Monday to Saturday, 10am - 4pm 01744 417069

RAINHILL

9 Dane Court, Weaver Avenue. Rainhill, Prescot, L35 4LU Monday to Saturday, 9am - 4pm

0151 426 9940

RAINFORD

16a Church Road, Rainford, St. Helens, WAII 8HE Monday to Saturday, 10am - 4pm 01744 886829

STOCKBRIDGE VILLAGE

12 The Croft, Stockbridge Village, Knowsley, L28 INR Monday to Saturday, 10am - 4pm 0151 480 9796

FOUR ACRE

Unit 8, Four Acre Lane Shopping Centre, St Helens, WA9 4BZ Monday to Saturday, 9:30am-4pm 01744 814121

BILLINGE

216-218 Main Street, Billinge, WN5 7PE Monday, 9am - 4pm Tuesday to Saturday, 10am-4pm

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Corporate Fundraisers

We are grateful to local businesses who support the hospice by raising funds and awareness.

PLEASE FIND US ON LINKEDIN



SPAR donated £2,100 thanks to a lucky National Lottery win. With the winning ticket bought at the Prescot Road store!

Allwyn Entertainment, who runs the National Lottery, rewarded the store through its 'Share the Win' scheme and so the team at the store chose to donate this to Willowbrook



SUPER ICES

They visited our hospice on a sunny and hot day. treating all our staff. volunteers, patients and visitors to any ice cream, plus a cash donation!



STARBUCKS

We're incredibly grateful to the new **Starbucks** on St Helens Linkway for their amazing generosity in donating £1,330.59 from their opening day takings to support our cause!



GXO HAYDOCK

Huge thanks to the incredible team at GXO Haydock for their amazing support of Willowbrook Hospice! We're so inspired by the staff who took on the Born Survivor challenge - the UK's biggest authentic military obstacle course - to raise a superb £1.480 for Willowbrook!!!



COMMUNICATIONS

PLUS raised £3,000 from their Annual Golf Day. We are grateful for their ongoing commitment to Willowbrook Hospice.

HA CIVILS kindly Sutton Warehouse at no cost to the hospice.

Thank you to **FAIRFIELD** INDEPENDENT HOSPITAL

for choosing Willowbrook as their chosen charity of the year!

BEESLEY & FILDES have offered great support this year! Staff members have bravely taken part in our Sunrise on Snowdon challenge and a Skydive raising lots of much needed funds!



MULTIFIT PILATES

Throughout this year, Laura has been offering free pilates sessions to staff and volunteers as well as hosting wellness events and s with her clients in aid of Willowbrook.



PSD VEHICLE RENTAL kindly provided donations of easter eggs, sponsored and supported our events and provided the use of a van for our large events.



HAYDOCK COMMERCIALS

Haydock Commercials kindly donated easter eggs which were offered to our Chatty Café guests.



SAINTS RLFC

Saints RLFC continues to be a fantastic supporter of Willowbrook – giving us numerous opportunities to fundraise through bucket collections at the Totally Wicked Stadium, Tesco St Helens,

SPECIAL

Embracing the life lived, not just the loss

Honoured to support Willowbrook Hospice and the amazing care provided from its volunteers and staff.

For a friendly, personal response:
My own personal number: 07977207733
Alternatively email: specialfunerals@gmail.com
www.specialfunerals.com

Every Service as Individual as the Life it Celebrates.



Darren

Introducing Darren Anders, an experienced, reputable and very popular funeral celebrant who can help to create services that celebrate the life of a person with warmth, accuracy, sincerity, respect and humour if required. Tailored services with or without religious content at crematorium chapels, cemeteries and alternative venues

Darren is also often asked to guide people in choosing a funeral director who will best suit an individual or family's needs, helping them feel supported and confident with the choices they make and informed about any practical arrangements including considerations around cost. He can also help people's thoughts and discussions on funeral plans, direct cremations or with alterative, less known about options

For people who are at end of life or those simply planning ahead, Darren can work with them and any associates to ensure their thoughts and ideas are respected.



LEADING LOCAL SPECIALISTS

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- 2 DERBY STREET, PRESCOT, L34 3LJ
- THE OLD BANK 499, WARRINGTON ROAD, RAINHILL, L35 OLR



THINKING ABOUT THE FUTURE

Everyone should make a Will and we can give advice and guidance as to the most appropriate form of Will for you to cover your individual requirements and to try to minimise, where possible, the impact of Inheritance Tax.

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The Saints Hearse



Something Special for a Special Saints Fan

For those looking for an alternative to a traditional funeral vehicle, The Saints Hearse offers something special for a special Saints fan. Decorated with imagery celebrating St Helens rugby, it's perfect for fans who want to reflect their passion and personality while bringing a little positivity to what can be an upsetting day.

Whether planning ahead or currently arranging somebody's service, this themed hearse can be a special addition to a special farewell.

Book through a funeral director, or for further details contact the Saints Hearse driver

Frank: 07879624391



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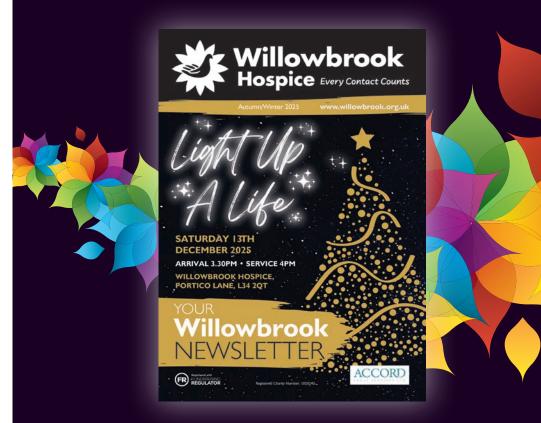


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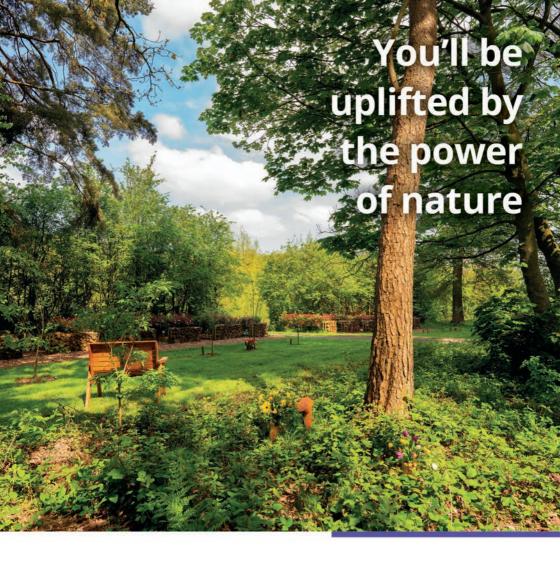




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