

Your



HOSPICE UPDATE

TOGETHER, WE'RE MAKING EVERY MOMENT MATTER

AUTUMN/WINTER 2024

| PATIENT STORIES

| ART TRAIL PLAN

| FUNDRAISING IDEAS



Care where it's needed

How we help patients in the hospice and at home



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WELCOME

Hello and welcome to the Autumn/Winter edition of Your Hospice Update.

There is no avoiding the fact that the past few months have been a very difficult time for everyone at Birmingham Hospice. Back in June we had to take the very difficult decision to make significant redundancies and reduce some of our services, due to an estimated £2.4 million budget deficit. It has been very sad to see many other hospices across the UK face the same challenges.

This is no reflection on the generous support we receive from the public and is entirely down to increasing costs, and a lack of government funding for the hospice sector. We remain hugely grateful for everyone's help, whether that is through donating to us, taking part in one of our events, or visiting one of our shops.

We continue to campaign for fair funding for hospices locally and nationally but, in the absence of any additional support, we were not able to delay those difficult decisions any longer.

By making redundancies now, the hospice has ensured it is sustainable and here for people who need our care for the years ahead. We remain fully committed to providing



Simon Fuller

outstanding end of life care through Inpatient Units, day services and in the community.

Finally, this is my last introduction to the magazine as I will be retiring from my role as CEO at the end of the year. My successor, Paul Bytheway, will be starting work later this year.

By taking these difficult steps now, Paul will be better placed to lead the future development of the hospice. This is an amazing organisation with people at its heart;

Paul comes with huge passion for what we all do, and I'm very pleased to be handing over to someone who cares deeply about end of life care.

Thank you for your ongoing support. I hope you enjoy reading the latest updates in this magazine.

Best wishes

Simon Fuller
CEO, Birmingham Hospice

“We remain hugely grateful for everyone's help”

“It's a place of happiness”

Husband shares Kirsty's hospice story

For some patients, our care can last for several years, and this was the case for Kirsty Ward who was supported at home by our Community Team and later in our Inpatient Unit, where she was able to spend her final weeks surrounded by family and friends.

When Kirsty was diagnosed with breast cancer for the second time in 2019, at the age of 41, further scans revealed it had spread to her liver, lungs and bones, meaning that it could not be treated, and she was referred to Birmingham Hospice for support.

She received visits at home from our Community Team, who assisted her with her pain relief and medication, as well as providing someone to listen and offer advice where needed. When her condition deteriorated, she was admitted to our Inpatient Unit in March 2024, and she died there three weeks later.

Her husband Ricki said: “When hospice care was first mentioned, we were apprehensive as we thought that meant she was going to die very soon, but in fact she was supported at home for almost five years. Kirsty didn't need to come into the hospice until the end of her life but she received counselling, moral support, pain relief and help to organise her medication.

“When Kirsty became seriously ill, she wasn't herself and I remember how scared she was in hospital. She wanted to go back home but we were advised that would be very difficult for me.”



Ricki and Kirsty

Ricki said that neither of them were sure what the inpatient unit would be like, but that turned out to be the best decision they could have made, with Kirsty benefiting from the care and support of our entire team, as well as the homely atmosphere and the opportunity to spend as much time as possible with those close to her.

“We didn't know what to expect but once she got to the hospice, she changed completely, and she felt supported and happy,” Ricki explained.

“It was simple things like flowers in the room, watching the birds outside and having nice food to eat, that made her feel like she wasn't in a hospital. She was made comfortable, looked after by every single member of staff, and no-one ever made her feel like she was a burden.

“It was as though she'd made her peace with what was happening. She knew she would be safe and didn't have to worry any more.”

The opportunity for family and friends to visit in a comfortable environment helped both Kirsty and those who were close to her. And Ricki said that, despite what was coming, it was a happy environment

where everyone was able to make the most of the time they had.

“Kirsty had a lot of people who wanted to be with her, and Jess the ward nurse offered to put us in the Family Centre, which was a lifeline for us before we could all sit together in this lovely place looking over the garden.

“It sounds strange but all we did was laugh. The hospice isn't a place of death, it's a place of happiness, where you can laugh and be with your loved ones.

Everything else, the day to day grind of the illness, was put to one side and we were allowed to be friends and family, and didn't have to be carers; that was the biggest help of all.”

And the support did not end when Kirsty died, with bereavement counselling also offered to her loved ones.

Ricki added: “That was something I'd never have expected beforehand. The work the hospice does supporting family and friends is absolutely vital and it's unthinkable that it could be stopped if the funding wasn't there.

“The support that's been given – whether that's counselling, or just something as simple as a hand on the shoulder or a smile, or taking a minute to ask how you are – has made such a difference.”

“The support that's been given has made such a difference”



www.birminghamhospice.co.uk

CONTACT US

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FUNDRAISING

fundraise@birminghamhospice.org.uk
0121 465 2009

RETAIL (INC. GIFT AID)

retail@birminghamhospice.org.uk

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176 Raddlebarn Road,
Selly Park, Birmingham
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Erdington

76 Grange Road,
Erdington, Birmingham
B24 0DF

0121 465 2000

Murray's story

When Murray Sim was diagnosed with terminal stomach cancer, his wife Anna and daughters Kirsten and Lauren were able to call on the support of our Hospice at Home and Inpatient Unit (IPU) teams to provide the dignity, choice, care and comfort he deserved.

The cancer was discovered by doctors in March 2023 after he suffered from stomach pain, but Murray had already been going in and out of hospital since October of the previous year and had his right adrenal gland removed following a biopsy.

The diagnosis was a shock to the family as he had already been successfully treated for kidney cancer in 2016.

The whole family rallied and Lauren, who was studying a Master's degree in Sheffield, started spending one week a month at home in April.

Lauren said: "It was a really hard and difficult time for Dad coming in and out of the hospital and it became really stressful for us."

In September 2023, Murray's chemotherapy was stopped and he returned home to receive care from a Hospice at Home nurse.

Anna recalled: "We just wanted him home then. We had a bed downstairs

for him, and he was then home for 10 days.

"A Hospice at Home nurse visited Murray and touched base with us every morning. For the first four or five days, he was good, and he could still do normal things like getting himself lunch and sitting in the garden."

Lauren added: "When Birmingham Hospice visited us at the house, they were very nice and comforting, offering us counselling and

Birmingham Hospice allowed us to be a family and not carers

the opportunity to talk to someone if we needed."

Murray decided to go into our IPU after experiencing breathing problems.

"This support from the hospice was so important,"

Anna said. "Murray started to notice the changes to his body, and decided he didn't want this to happen at home, and he didn't want to die at home. Although he was struggling a lot, he still thought of us first."

It was important that Murray was able to make the decision. "It was his



decision, and his voice was heard," said Kirsten, who is a paramedic.

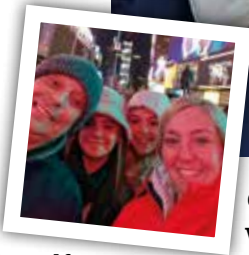
Murray was made comfortable by the IPU staff. He watched Six Nations rugby matches with a nurse and liked being able to see the peaceful garden. Staff washed and shaved him and made sure he wore clean and comfortable clothes.

On October 9 the whole family were able to be with him when he died peacefully.

Anna added: "He knew we were with him. We are so grateful to the hospice for this."

In Murray's honour, the family organised a golf day at Pye Hayes Golf Club on his birthday and held a Euros sweepstake, raising £6,750 for the hospice.

"The support from Birmingham Hospice allowed us to be a family and not carers," Anna said.



HOSPICE SINGERS TO SAY FAREWELL TO STALWARTS AT CHRISTMAS CONCERT

It will be the end of an era for Birmingham Hospice Singers at their Christmas Concert when they say a fond farewell to husband-and-wife team Joe and Marion Biddlestone.

The choir will be performing at Selly Oak Methodist Church on Saturday, 14 December (3pm start) to raise funds for the hospice. It will be the final concert conducted by Joe and performed by Marion, who is a member of the sopranos.

Marion is a founder member of the choir, which started in September 2013, and Joe joined as Musical Director in January 2014.

The couple will be moving closer to family in York. Marion has been associated with the hospice for 38 years as a volunteer.

Marion said: "We are very sad to be leaving Birmingham Hospice Singers and the many friends we have both in the choir and elsewhere in Birmingham."

The choir has raised almost £25,000 for Birmingham Hospice over the last 11 years.

Despite their best efforts a new Musical Director has yet to be found.

"We have been advertising the post for about six months without success," added Marion.



"This is possibly partly due to the fact that this is a voluntary role with all money raised being donated to the hospice."

The new Musical Director must have experience of choirs and conducting, and want to help a local charity. They would develop the concert programme, take rehearsals and conduct concert performances.

Tickets for the concert are

£10 for adults and £2.50 for children and can be bought at the church on the day.

Anyone interested in becoming the choir's Musical Director can contact the Birmingham Hospice Singers secretary via the hospice's Fundraising Team on 0121 465 2009. Alternatively, send an email to fundraisevol@birminghamhospice.org.uk.

FEELING BULLISH ABOUT ART TRAIL PLAN

Businesses, schools, community groups and artists are invited to join the herd.

Get ready to witness the thrilling spectacle of 'Bulls in the City' as it charges into Birmingham during the summer of 2025!

Picture this: a thrilling parade of larger-than-life sculptures, each one a unique masterpiece of artistry, depicting the legendary Birmingham Bullring Bull. But wait, there's more! These majestic sculptures aren't just static displays; they're part of an exhilarating, free-for-all adventure trail designed to thrill families and tourists alike.

Bulls in the City isn't just about awe-inspiring art – it's about making a real difference. By joining forces with us, local businesses can showcase their support for Birmingham and contribute to a cause close to many people's hearts: Birmingham Hospice. Every pound raised during this epic event will go towards providing essential care and support for people and families living with a terminal diagnosis.

So, fellow Brummies, seize this chance to be a part of something



truly un-bull-ieveable! Join us for an event of colour, creativity, and community spirit, all rolled into one unforgettable experience for the people of Birmingham.

Get involved today at: www.bullsinthecity.co.uk.

How Stepping Stones can help

Birmingham Hospice is not just here to support the patients under our care – we also help their family and other loved ones both during and after their time with us.

Derek Kinahan's wife Anna was cared for by the Hospice at Home Team in the last weeks of her life, and he has since kept up his connection with us by attending our Stepping Stones group – an informal meeting place for bereaved adults who may be feeling lonely or isolated, who would benefit from meeting others in the same situation.

Stepping Stones is run by our Wellbeing Team volunteers who are trained and experienced around the needs of bereaved people. After attending sessions at the hospice, the hope is that members will continue to meet up with each other to offer mutual support.

Derek said: "There were about half a dozen of us, plus Chris and Carole from the hospice, and we just sat and chatted for two hours, sharing our experiences and things we do that help us.

"It's very informal – just a cup of tea and a chat, but these are things I can't

talk about with anyone else. To have people I can talk to who have been through similar things themselves, is a great help."

Derek said his experiences of the past few months had really brought home how important the hospice was to the city and how many people's lives it touched.

He added: "For people of my age group in Birmingham, I bet most of them know someone who's been looked after by the hospice in some way. That's why it's such a vital part of the community, and I can't stress that enough."



Derek and Anna



TICK THE BOX FOR GIFT AID AND BOOST YOUR IMPACT

Are you a UK taxpayer? Did you know that your donation to Birmingham Hospice can go 25% further at no extra cost to you?

Just tick the Gift Aid box when you donate!

By ticking the Gift Aid box, the government adds 25p to every £1 you donate. This means your support can provide even more care and comfort to those who need it most.

If you're donating by post or in person, ask for a Gift Aid form by calling our Supporter Experience Team on 0121 465 2009 or email fundraise@birminghamhospice.org.uk

Already donated and forgot to tick the Gift Aid box? You can still fill out a Gift Aid form for past donations. Please go onto the website at www.birminghamhospice.org.uk/regular-giving. Alternatively, contact our Supporter Experience Team for more details on 0121 465 2009.

SHARING THE LOVE AT BIRMINGHAM HOSPICE

We're no strangers to romance at Birmingham Hospice, having arranged many impromptu weddings, anniversary celebrations and grand gestures throughout our history.

We're committed to making every moment matter for our patients, and the people who matter most to them. This means we've been lucky enough to share some truly special moments and milestones over the years. **This Valentine's Day, we're sharing the love with our Hearts and High Rollers Ball, where you'll be transported back in time to 1950s Las Vegas** – and ahead of this big day, we're looking back at some of our most treasured romantic memories over the years.

Halloween was brought forward for patient Lynne and her partner Chris, who married in a spooky ceremony at our Selly Park site. Hospice teams arranged the wedding in just 24 hours, with the couple's loved ones in attendance.

When Tony Nurrish was brought into the IPU, his wife of 50 years, Marie, was able to stay with him in our Family Centre, which the nurses described as the "honeymoon suite". Our Wellbeing Team organised a bronze hand cast of Tony and Marie to be made, which Marie cherishes to this day.

When our supporter Naomi married her partner Stacey, she made Birmingham Hospice a crucial part of their big day by gifting all the guests Birmingham Hospice branded wedding favours. Her grandad received care from our Hospice at Home Team, and Naomi and her family have been supporters ever since.

HEARTS & High Rollers

Whatever your reason for supporting the hospice, our Valentine's Ball is sure to make you feel like celebrating love. Why not join us at Villa Park on Friday 14 February for a magical Valentine's Day you won't forget?



Congratulations to dedicated hospice supporter Richard Green, who received the Order of Mercy – an award for distinguished voluntary work within the health and social care sectors – in recognition of his work for us, supporting the Treecycling and Ride the Reservoir events.



A huge thank you Paulie, Philip and their friends, who took on the Royal Sutton Fun Run in memory of their dad Paul, who was cared for at our Inpatient Unit, and raised a phenomenal £31,067 for the hospice. We are so grateful for your support.

HETTIE'S HOSPICE HEROES



Gardens back in June and collectively raised over £20,000, walking either 2.5km or 10km in memory of their loved ones. You're all heroes!



HELPING AT A DIFFICULT TIME

Our friendly House Clearance Team is here to help remove the stress caused by a loved one's death with our flexible, reliable and compassionate service.

Organising the clearance of a relative's home can be emotional, but Birmingham Hospice's team focuses on meeting people's needs to ensure a painless process.

Customers can arrange a free no obligation quote by booking an appointment with Retail Logistics and House Clearance Manager James Hogan, who will assess the property and its contents.

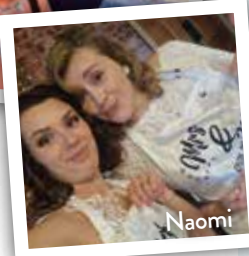
We can provide a quote lower than many of our rivals because we strive to re-sell and recycle as many goods as possible.

All items are removed and there is no charge for goods which can be re-sold by our stores, but there is a cost for disposing of anything in poor or damaged condition.

"House clearance is a godsend for people because it takes away the worry, especially if they have lost someone," said John Ridd, Retail Area Manager South.

No clearance is too big or small; our team has emptied large dwellings which have been empty for several years, as well as ones which have been recently left vacant.

They have also worked closely with terminally ill people to tailor their home's clearance. Find out more at www.birminghamhospice.org.uk/house-clearances.



SUPPORT BIRMINGHAM HOSPICE THIS CHRISTMAS



GIFTMAS



RUDOLPH RUN



LIGHT UP A LIFE



CHRISTMAS GROTTTO



CHRISTMAS CARDS



TREECYCLING

We are in a funding crisis. Donate today to ensure your local hospice can continue providing our expert care this Christmas, and in the future.

www.birminghamhospice.org.uk/christmas

Care at Christmas



CHRISTMAS IS COMING TO RELOVED BRUM!

Following a successful launch last year, we are delighted to announce that Santa will once again be paying a visit to our Harborne superstore, Reloved Brum, to spread some festive cheer.

Our Christmas Grotto will make a return on Saturday 7 and Sunday 8 December, with 10-minute slots available throughout the days, together with Breakfast with Santa in the café from 9-10am on Sunday.

All events will be available to book on our website at www.birminghamhospice.org.uk/christmas.



Christmas card designs revealed

Birmingham Hospice will once again be selling its popular Christmas cards this year to help supporters spread festive cheer while helping us to raise vital funds.

As in previous years, we have commissioned a number of designs showing Birmingham landmarks during

the festive season – in this case the Birmingham Bull, Bournville Green, the German Christmas Market and the city's canals.

There will also be a selection of traditional illustrated cards.

The cards will be sold in

packs of ten, in our shops and online. All are printed and packed in the UK, and are plastic free and recyclable.





Scan here

Light up a Life 24



Let's come together, celebrate and remember at this year's Light up a Life.

Our Light up a Life 2024 services:

Monday 9th December

6pm for 6.45 start

Harvest Fields Centre,
Harvest Fields Way,
Sutton Coldfield B75 5TJ

Thursday 12th December

6pm for 6.45 start

Birmingham Hospice,
176 Raddlebarn Road, Selly Park,
Birmingham B29 7DA

Dedicate a star in memory of your loved one and donate to secure the future of hospice care for those living with a terminal illness and their loved ones.

www.birminghamhospice.org.uk/lual