

St Luke's 
HOSPICE



Spring 2023

We Care



How a peaceful first visit to St Luke's took away Poppy's hospice fears
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IN THIS ISSUE!.. Meet our Hospice Heroes
Plus: Help from the Heart - 20 Years of Bereavement Support Service

Hello...



Lindsey Bennister
Chief Executive

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I am delighted to be introducing the magazine to you for the first time as the new permanent CEO of St Luke's Hospice. I have received a very warm welcome from everyone here and in our community in my first six months and it is wonderful to be a part of the St Luke's family.

The level of commitment to the Hospice from our dedicated staff, volunteers and community is heartening. The compassion and care for our patients and families is clear to see.

St Luke's is a special place for the communities in Harrow and Brent. I have met volunteers, voluntary sector groups, businesses, faith groups, friends and individuals who raise enormous funds, all helping us to focus on the excellent care of our patients.

I intend to become a familiar and trusted face to you all and I look forward to meeting many of you in the months ahead.

The theme of our spring issue is remembrance. On page 4 you will hear from Mos Pracdel about his memories

of his beautiful wife, Poppy and their experiences of the Hospice. We reflect on the wonderful achievements of last year's Hospice Heroes on pages 6-7.

On page 9 we hear from our Bereavement Support volunteer, Jean Thomas, who has been helping our families since the service began 20 years ago. You can also find out how we can help you to keep the memories of loved ones alive on page 11.

We recently said a fond farewell to our Chair of the past six years, Gillian Schiller. We thank her for her dedication to St Luke's and say hello and welcome to her successor, Meg Lustman. We are very happy to introduce Meg to you on the back page.

We now look forward with excitement to some new projects and events this summer. Please read on to find out more.

Thank you, as always, for your support.



Call: 020 8382 8000

Email: info@stlukes-hospice.org

Visit: stlukes-hospice.org

Write: Kenton Grange, 385 Kenton Road, Harrow, Middlesex, HA3 0YG

Follow us:

 facebook.com/stlukeshospice

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 instagram.com/stlukeshospice

UPCOMING

EVENTS



MAY

Hackney Half Marathon

May 21st

£20 registration fee, £200 sponsorship target

London 2 Brighton Ultra Challenge

May 27th-28th

Various Prices and offers available

JUNE

Midnight Walk

June 16th

Early Bird tickets before 25th May

£18 Adult/£8 Children



London to Paris Bike Ride

June 14th-18th

Various Prices and offers available

Inflatable 5k - St Albans

June 17th and 18th

£10 registration fee, £100 sponsorship target

AUGUST

London Triathlon

August 5th and 6th

£30 registration fee, £300 sponsorship target

SEPTEMBER

Thames Path Challenge

September 9th-10th

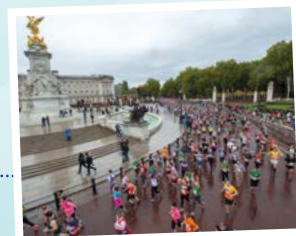
Various Prices and offers available

Firewalk

September 28th

Harrow Masonic District Lodge

Early Bird Tickets £20



OCTOBER

Bournemouth Half Marathon

October 8th

£20 registration fee, £250 sponsorship

Royal Parks Half Marathon

October 8th

£20 registration fee, £300 minimum target

NOVEMBER

Run Alton Towers 5k, 10k Half Marathon, plus a kids race!

November 11th and 12th

£10 registration fee for an adult race and kids go

free! Sponsorship target £200

DECEMBER

UK Bungee (taking place in Windsor)

Various dates available

Registration fee £30,

£150 sponsorship target

Light up a Life

Sunday 3rd December

Santa Dash

December 9th

Nower Hill School

Pinner



You could organise a head shave, cake or book sale, tea or garden party, a donations page for a special event or hold a charity football match. The choice is yours!

Poppy was everything in my life...

Mos Pracdel tells us about the extraordinary love he had for his wife, Poppy, and how a first visit to St Luke's and to our peaceful gardens took away her hospice fears.

"Poppy was wonderful – she was really an extraordinary person. She was unique, special and different to anyone I had met before. She enriched my world beyond words. I started looking forward to life and the future and that was all thanks to her.

When Poppy was in her late 20s she was diagnosed with skin cancer and needed an operation and a skin graft on her lower leg. She was recuperating and decided to attend dance



classes to regain strength and mobility. That is when we met and my life changed forever.

Her leg gave her lots of problems over the years but we were living a normal life and dancing together. We trained in Ballroom and Latin American dancing and got in the top 24 of the UK Ballroom Championships.

Sadly, in 2002 Poppy started having problems with her leg again. She had ulcers that were taking longer to heal. At the time we didn't know that it was cancer. By 2016, her leg gave way and her bone had disintegrated completely. Very sadly she needed an amputation.

We then thought she was cured but in a later follow-up appointment having noticed some enlarged groin nodes, we were given the devastating news that she wasn't cancer-free.

After trying further treatments that were unfortunately also not successful, Poppy was referred to the Hospice by her GP but at the time she didn't want to come. She didn't want to accept that things were only heading one way and, in all honesty, neither did I. The cruel reality in front of our very eyes was so unpalatable. It wasn't until she was feeling very unwell and she was referred to the palliative care team in 2019 that I said to her, "Poppy, my love, why don't we

just go and look around and find out about what they can offer?"

I wanted Poppy to try the Hospice's alternative therapies. We were shown around and I distinctly remember the moment when we saw the garden. It is forever imprinted on my mind, it was so peaceful, serene, calm, and so wonderful with the sound of the water feature. You could look around at nature and see the birds coming for a drink. That was our first experience of the Hospice and that day Poppy had a Reiki session. Then she regularly started coming back in as an outpatient in order to control her symptoms.

Poppy also had many visits at home by the Hospice's palliative care team. As her pain became worse they admitted her to the Hospice's Inpatient Unit but sadly, while in the Hospice she lost consciousness.

The nurses in the Hospice were absolutely amazing and wonderfully accommodating and let me stay as long as I wanted to. I asked if she was going to make it. I was told by the doctor that she was young and that her body would put up a fight. And didn't my beautiful Poppy put up a fight! She was so strong and that night I stayed with her. They then moved her to a private room, and from that moment on I was by her side until she tragically passed away.

I can never thank the Hospice staff enough for their kindness, professionalism and the humane way they treated Poppy in her last days of life. That will stay with me for as long as I live. I still

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remember all their faces. They looked after me and were so supportive all the time, so kind and gentle. They made what was clearly a terrible experience so much easier to bear.

I think people have a misconception that a hospice is somewhere you just go to die, but there is so much more on offer. Patients may still have many years ahead of them and live fulfilling lives, so they can benefit enormously from the therapies that are available at St Luke's. People should know about these things.

Poppy was everything in my life and losing her shattered my world but my lasting memory of the last few days of her life are thanks to the wonderful care that she got from everyone at St Luke's. I will always have a somehow happy memory. I will cherish the last few days of her life, clearly not because of the experience itself, but because of the way that the wonderful staff looked after her. That will always stay with me.”

The moving experiences of Mos and Poppy have led him to write a book about their lives.

'My Beautiful Poppy – A Story of Love in Chapters' is available on Amazon with 50% of the proceeds going to St Luke's Hospice and other cancer-related charities.

It's time to celebrate our Hospice Heroes!



Every year we are blown away by the kind acts, generosity and dedication of all our supporters. We would like to take this opportunity to say thank you to you all. An extra big thank you also goes to all of the following for being really exceptional Hospice Heroes!



Businesses

Grant Harrod Lerman Davis LLP – on 20th September 2022, Grant Harrod Lerman Davis LLP (GHLD) walked 16 miles across the 16 bridges that cross the River Thames in Central London, from Tower Bridge to Putney Bridge, to raise money for St Luke's Hospice.

GHLD set an initial target of £16,000, £1,000 per bridge. A target that they smashed, raising over £21,000 for the Hospice – an incredible achievement!

Infatech Systems – supported St Luke's by replacing and upgrading our Fire Alarm system, ensuring St Luke's remains a safe

and compliant environment in which to provide expert end of life care.

HSBC – The managers and senior staff of the local HSBC branches gave up a day of their working week to get their hands dirty, volunteering in the gardens at St Luke's. The team helped clear shrubs and lay top soil to prepare an area that will soon become a Nature Walk within the grounds of the Hospice.

HSBC were also the Headline Sponsors of the Midnight Walk in 2022, helping to promote the event, hosting fundraising events and volunteering on the night.

Toureen Group – Thank you to everyone at Toureen Group, Aldenham Golf & Country Club and all of the teams who took

Morrisons Harrow –

For the past year, Morrisons Harrow and its customers have been supporting St Luke's by generously providing hygiene products for patient use within our Inpatient Unit and out in the community, as well as packs of biscuits and other sweet treats. These gestures have been greatly appreciated!



part in our annual Golf Day. The day was a huge success with on course entertainment and in-play competitions, raffles, auctions and live music, raising a phenomenal total of over **£80,000!** We are busy planning to do it all over again at our 2023 Golf Day so keep your eyes peeled for further announcements!



Community

Bentley Wood High School

We are so proud of these wonderful students from Bentley Wood High school who presented brilliantly in front of a panel of judges from First Give to win £1,000 for St Luke's Hospice!

Choosing us as their charity, they worked really hard, raising money, collecting and donating to our shops and collecting heart-warming stories and fantastic facts as part of their presentation.

Harrow Baptist Church

A wonderful team of volunteers have a very well organised rota and take it in turns to run a coffee morning every Tuesday from 10.30am-12pm. They provide a lovely cup of tea and there is always homemade cake! This coffee morning has been running for over 30 years. Next time you're in Harrow why not pop in? Everyone is welcome. Over £30,000 has been raised from these coffee mornings.

Collections team

Mark Phillips' collections team collected over £16,000 for the Hospice last year. They braved all kinds of weather and never complain! Thank you.

Julie Williams is a volunteer gardener at the Hospice and she kindly knitted lots of chicks ready for Easter. Each sat on a Cadbury's Creme Egg and they were very quickly all bought from our reception area.



Collection boxes –

Mina Patel does a regular round of collecting donation tins from stores and bringing them to the Hospice for us, raising over £500 a year.

The Middlesex FA –

This wonderful team have been using their football matches to collect a fantastic £3,000 for us.



Moranos Wine Bar

Supporting the Hospice by holding Music Bingo, quiz nights and themed nights, they have so far raised nearly £9,000 as a community.



Thank you for giving families a lifeline

Because of caring people like you, an incredible £12,500 has been raised to support those coping with end of life this spring.

The personal journey that supporter, Clare, (pictured) shared about her terminally ill mum touched many of our hearts. Thank you to everyone who shared the love. You raised enough to fund over 400 patient home visits. That is incredible!

Clare sends her thanks to you: "I strongly believe that I could not have got through our difficult end of life journey without the Hospice, and people like you who support their important work. Your kindness gave us strength during mum's illness and the strength I've got today. Against all odds, we carried out mum's wish to die peacefully at home. Knowing your donations will help more families like mine really means the world. Thank you."

Your free Will offer!

St Luke's Hospice has partnered with Balance Consultancy and A L Law associates to offer a limited number of simple Wills, and mirror Wills for couples, for FREE throughout 2023.

If you need to update or replace your Will you can also make use of this offer to do so. If your Will is more complicated, there may be a fee but your solicitor will outline this cost before taking any further steps.

If you would like to find out how to obtain your offer, please don't hesitate to contact St Luke's Hospice Legacy team today via email at remember@stlukes-hospice.org or visit our website

stlukes-hospice.org/supporting-us/make-a-will-free

There is no obligation to leave us a gift in your Will, your personal wishes should come first when writing your Will. Once you are happy that they are taken care of, if you choose to leave a gift, of any size, to St Luke's we will be profoundly grateful. The NHS funds only 25% of the total cost of St Luke's services so your legacy is our future.



We recommend you get independent legacy advice when making a Will. Please note that all participating partners will be acting in your interests and on your instructions only. St Luke's Hospice pays for the writing of Wills as this helps us to generate income from gifts in Wills by removing the need for supporters to pay for their Wills. There is no obligation to leave a legacy gift to us.

Join our special group of friends

People who are coping with end of life can lose their appetite because of symptoms or medication related to their illness. This can affect their quality of life. Can you become a friend of St Luke's today, to help bring peoples' desire for food back with

freshly prepared meals tailored to their individual needs?

Donating £5 a month could provide regular nutritious and flavoursome meals to people being cared for in our Inpatient Unit.

To start your regular gift and become part of our special group of friends, please scan the QR code or complete the enclosed donation form.



Help from the heart

St Luke's Bereavement Support Service started 20 years ago in 2003 – Bereavement Support Volunteer, Jean Thomas has been there from the start.

"I first joined St Luke's in November 1989 when the Hospice was located in a house in Harrow View, offering a day care service. At the beginning, the house at Kenton Grange needed a complete refurbishment and the building of the Inpatient Unit. I volunteered on reception during the refurbishment. I then supported the Day Care Service where patients could spend a day socialising with music and art. There was also hairdressing and a lunch provided.

Once the Inpatient Unit was ready I was pleased to transfer there, helping with meals, making cups of tea, chatting and also helping to support families. I was always concerned that once a patient had passed away and the family came to collect their belongings and the death certificate, that the Hospice would probably then lose contact with the family. So I was pleased to train with the Volunteer Bereavement Support Unit allowing families to access ongoing support if they wished to. I was one of the first bereavement volunteers and I'm still there now.

It usually takes a while for a person to relax and be confident to talk. They are then able to speak of their feelings and thoughts. It is most important to listen.

You work with someone in the hope of making a difference to their life. Little by little you see a positive change in them. It is amazing to see the progress that people can make over a period of time and how they begin to cope with their loss. Time and what they do for themselves all helps but the hope is to give some help and support when they most need it.

I always say that you should cry when you need to – even if it's 10 years later. It's like a valve. Whilst life will never be the same, it is possible to show that life can be good and satisfying, given time and support."

Jean is an invaluable member of the Bereavement Support Team, not only for those who receive her support, but also to the other members of the team who benefit from her expertise and experience. We thank her for her many years of dedication, during which time many people have benefitted from her kind nature, expertise and good will.



A card of thanks received by Jean

Inside a card of thanks, the words express how much Jean's support has meant: 'I saw this card and thought of you. When my mum passed away I felt that things were going to boil over and I did not really know how I was going to cope. Then I started my counselling with you – the hands represent you, you caught me. Thank you Jean for walking with me on this difficult journey'.

“ You work with someone in the hope of making a difference to their life. Little by little you see a positive change in them. ”



We're on the move!



Our new warehouse will house a brand new superstore, making it a one-stop-shop for all things pre-loved.

This summer, we are moving out of our warehouse and into the Waverley Superstore & Donation Centre, located behind Harrow Crown Court.

Our biggest project is the move to a new, bigger and better warehouse, located within the borough of Harrow this summer. After occupying our current site for almost a decade, we have outgrown the building.

Our current site also requires extensive repairs, making the move to a new location a sensible one.

The new warehouse will feature a fully operational Donation Centre with a separate entrance for donations, along with more convenient parking. Here we will be able to receive large volumes of donated items, which we can then sort and store more efficiently, helping us to raise essential funds for the Hospice.

Our eBay sales team will also benefit from the improved space and facilities, giving them the opportunity to offer a wider range of items to our customers.

Excitingly, the new warehouse will be home to a brand new superstore occupying a significant part of the site. The shop will offer a wide range of items, including clothing, bric-a-brac, and furniture, making it a one-stop-shop for all things pre-loved. Our aim is to make this store a popular destination for customers who are looking for affordable yet high-quality pre-owned items. We will also be holding customer events, helping to raise awareness about the Hospice.

We are particularly in need of clothing, shoes, handbags, and toys, but we welcome any other items that are in good condition. We are always happy to hear from businesses who have surplus stock to donate to the Hospice. Donating items is an excellent way to support the Hospice's vital work, and we are truly grateful for everything we receive.

If you are having a clear-out, moving house, or have surplus stock, please contact our Donation Centre or visit our website at stlukes-hospice.org/donate-items



Keep memories alive with a Forever In Our Hearts Tribute Page

Losing someone dear to you is one of the hardest things you can ever go through. You may find it comforting to keep that person's memory alive by setting up a free St Luke's Forever In Our Hearts online tribute page in your loved one's name. You can add personal messages, photos, videos, donations and ask others to contribute in their honour.

Rhiannon created a tribute page in memory of her dad, Alan and says, "The support that St Luke's provided us during the hardest time of our lives was incredible. Knowing there was always help and a

friendly calm voice at the other end of the phone no matter what time it was helped us in indescribable ways. The Hospice was our absolute lifeline and gave us everything we needed in terms of both equipment and advice at home.

We would absolutely recommend St Luke's Forever In Our Hearts Tribute Page to others. It's a lovely place for others to visit, see photos of Alan and read messages about him.

To make the page more personalised, we added colourful happy photos of Alan so that everyone would be able to see

Tribute to Alan Graham, 1963 - 2022

Dedicated to the memory of Alan Graham



This site is a tribute to Alan Graham, who was born in London on February 18, 1963. He is much loved and will always be remembered.

Please use this page to share memories you have with Alan and to also donate money to St Luke's Hospice Brent & Harrow.

his smiling face and remember how happy he always was. Friends and family left messages when they donated, making the whole page seem far more personal.

The page was really easy to set up and we hoped that by raising donations, other families would benefit from the invaluable care and support that we received."

Find out more about St Luke's Forever In Our Hearts Tribute Page at www.stlukes-hospice.org/tributepage

Glow as you go at this year's Midnight Walk!

Please help us light up the night at this year's Midnight Walk! We want our walkers to have a really special and unforgettable experience. That's why the theme of Midnight Walk 2023 is 'The Brighter the Better'. Join 1,000 other walkers and dress up in an outfit of your choice, just remember to make it as bright as possible!

There will be great music from our live DJ, a chance to use all your best dance moves in

our warm up and lots of great photo opportunities. You can also visit our variety of stalls to help you really look the part. With henna and face painting on offer plus lots of merchandise, you can really go out in style! You will even get a finishers' medal to mark the occasion.

We offer a 5 mile or 9 mile walk. Each route is heavily marshalled so that your safety is ensured and so that they can cheer you on along the way!

St Luke's HOSPICE
MIDNIGHT WALK
THE BRIGHTER THE BETTER

Where: Byron Hall, HA3 5BD
 When: Friday 16th June 2023, walk starts at 10pm
 Book now: www.stlukes-hospice.org/midnightwalk

Fun for the whole family
 Free t-shirt and finishers' medal
 Fully marshalled route
 5 or 9 mile walk through the streets of Harrow
 Book before 25th May to secure Early Bird tickets

For more information visit www.stlukes-hospice.org/midnightwalk or email midnightwalk@stlukes-hospice.org

Getting to know our staff



**Meg Lustman,
Chair**

1 Welcome to St Luke's! Can you tell us a bit about yourself and why you wanted to become our new Chair?

I feel totally privileged and energised to be the new Chair of St Luke's. The importance of good palliative and end of life care is important to all of us and, as I live in Brent, it feels

personal too. Furthermore, I have always enjoyed supporting leaders and teams at times of transformation and believe that Lindsey's vision is a great one and I am excited to be able to support its execution with the help of the Board of Trustees.

2 What is your proudest accomplishment?

I jumped out of a plane at 12,000 ft for Breakthrough Breast Cancer, having raised over £25,000 in sponsorship. For those that know me, it was a huge surprise as I am not a thrill-seeker of any sort!

3 What's the best piece of advice you've ever been given?

"If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together."

This is an African proverb that speaks to my life-long belief in the power of team and community.

4 If you could learn to do something, what would it be and why?

I would like to be able to dance properly. I love music but am a really rubbish dancer and am very self-conscious. It's great exercise and it's really social. All very important in my life.

5 What makes you happy?

Spending time with my family. I am so lucky that we are all good friends and enjoy each others' company so much. I am blessed!

“ I jumped out of a plane at 12,000 ft for Breakthrough Breast Cancer, having raised over £25,000 in sponsorship. ”