



Volunteers' Handbook

Information for your volunteering role



Welcome to St Luke's Hospice

A very warm welcome and thank you for joining St Luke's. We hope you find your time with us enjoyable, rewarding and worthwhile.

Our volunteers are at the heart of the hospice. Every role – whether in reception, our inpatient unit, the gardens, shops, donation centre, eBay team, or wellbeing services – makes a real difference. By giving your time and skills, you help us provide the best possible care to patients and support to families, making every moment matter.

This handbook is here to answer the most common questions volunteers have, from what to expect on your first day to who to contact if you're unwell.

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Welcome to St Lukes

Thank you for giving us the most valuable gift: your time.

Volunteers are central to everything we do for people in Harrow and Brent who need end-of-life care and support. Our care is holistic—spanning our in-patient unit, home visits, day services and wellbeing activities—and none of it would be possible without the support of you, our valued volunteers.

Whether you are greeting families at reception, helping in our shops, tending our beautiful gardens, supporting fundraising activities or providing therapies, you play a direct and meaningful role in improving the lives of our patients and their families.

Volunteering is also social and deeply rewarding. Many people join to gain work experience or learn new skills, but remain because of the friendships, community and sense of purpose they find here.

This handbook outlines what you can expect from us and what we ask from you. Please do take the time to read it.

If you see me in the Hospice, please feel free to come and say hello—I always want to hear how you are getting on in your role and what you think of St Luke's.

On behalf of all who work at or use the services of St Luke's, a huge thank you for being part of our team.

Meg Lustman
Chair, St Luke's Hospice (Harrow & Brent)



Please do come up to me and say hello if you see me in the Hospice, I'm always keen to hear how you are going in your role.



About St Luke's Hospice

St Luke's Hospice cares for people in Harrow and Brent who are approaching the end of their life. Our aim is straightforward and that is to provide each person with the best possible quality of life, every single day.

Founded by the local community in 1987, we have been providing specialist inpatient care since 2000. Our unit supports people in their final days, helps manage challenging symptoms, and offers respite when families need a break.

We also care for families, not just patients. This includes emotional support, bereavement services, complementary therapies, and practical assistance

with the everyday challenges that come at such a difficult time, from managing financial and legal matters to navigating services and benefits.

Today, around two-thirds of our care takes place in people's own homes, as most patients prefer to be cared for where they live.

Our services are free of charge, open to everyone, and delivered with respect for all cultures, faiths and beliefs.

We receive only partial funding from the NHS and rely heavily on donations, fundraising events, gifts in wills, and the work of our shops to keep the services provided by the hospice funded. Volunteers like you are central to making this possible. We couldn't do it without you.



Our Vision:

A world where people experience the best life possible

Our Mission:

- Reach more people
- Constantly improve all that we do
- Extend our impact through collaboration, innovation and education
- Be an accountable and sustainable organisation

Our Values:

- **Caring:** Care for all those who deliver and need our services
- **Respect:** Demonstrate respect and be open minded, inclusive and approachable
- **Excellence:** Build an environment of continually achieving our goals
- **Inclusivity:** Strive to reach all sections of our community in all areas of our work
- **Empowerment:** Empower our community to live a better life

Hospice Management Structure

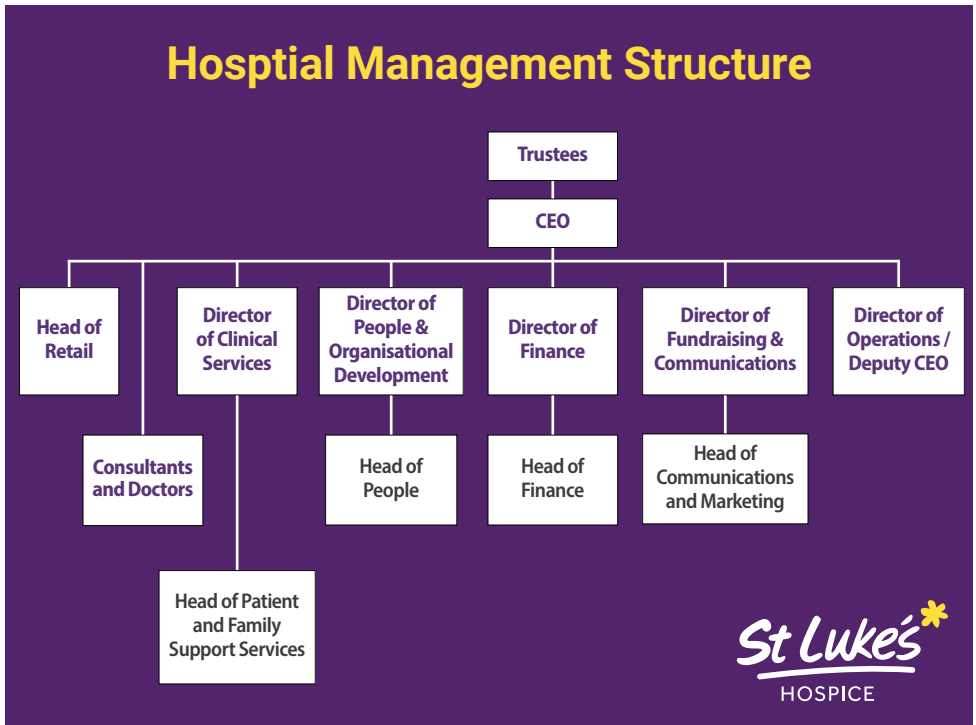
St Luke's is led by a team of trustees, senior managers and clinical staff. You don't need to know every detail, but here's how it fits together:

- **Trustees:** Oversee the charity and make sure we stay on track
- **CEO:** Runs the hospice day-to-day
- **Directors and managers:** Look after patient services, fundraising, retail, finance, People Team and volunteering, and facilities



- **Clinical leaders:** Manage our inpatient unit, home care, and community teams
- **Support services:** Fundraising, retail, maintenance, marketing and communications

What this means for you: you'll always have a named manager or supervisor to support you in your role.





Benefits of Volunteering

Why volunteer with St Luke's?

Volunteering is about giving: but it also gives back. Here's what many of our volunteers tell us they gain:

- **Meet new people:** Make friends and feel part of the community
- **Learn new skills:** From customer service to admin, with training and support
- **Boost your wellbeing:** Volunteering can reduce stress, keep you active, and give you a real sense of purpose
- **Enhance your CV:** Build confidence and work experience
- **Enjoy yourself:** Many say volunteering is fun, social, and deeply rewarding
- **Rewarding:** many say that they feel like they are contributing to a worthwhile cause



Every role, however big or small, helps people at the end of life and their families.

Volunteer agreement

Our promise to each other

Volunteering works best when both sides are clear about what to expect. This is our mutual agreement:

What we ask of you:

- Support the aims and values of St Luke's
- Follow our policies and guidance (we'll explain what's relevant to your role)
- Turn up for your agreed shifts or let your manager know if you can't make it
- Represent St Luke's positively and professionally
- Take part in any training needed for your role
- Keep patient, staff and volunteer information private
- Work safely and follow health and safety guidance
- Help us protect patients and other vulnerable people

What you can expect from us:

- A clear induction and any training you need
- A named manager to support you in your role
- Equal opportunities and fair treatment
- Reimbursement of agreed out-of-pocket expenses
- Insurance cover while volunteering
- Safe working conditions and clear health and safety practices
- Support if problems arise, dealt with promptly and fairly
- Regular check-ins or supervision sessions





Volunteer roles: The different ways you can help

Volunteers support every part of St Luke's. Here are the main roles – grouped so you can see where you might fit best.

Supporting patients and families:

- **Activities volunteers:** Run art or creative sessions that bring comfort and social connection
- **Bereavement support:** Offer understanding and a listening ear to people who are grieving



- **Community support:** Provide companionship or practical help at home, and support people adjusting after hospital or hospice care
- **Complementary therapy:** Deliver therapies that help patients relax, build strength and improve wellbeing
- **Inpatient unit (IPU):** Work alongside nurses and staff to support patients and families

Helping behind the scenes:

- **Admin:** Help with office tasks that keep the hospice running smoothly
- **Maintenance:** Support the team in keeping the building and facilities safe and welcoming
- **Gardening:** Care for our award-winning gardens, which patients, families and staff all enjoy
- **Moments in Life:** Record patients' personal stories to leave as keepsakes for loved ones
- **Reception:** Provide a warm welcome and friendly first impression for visitors

Fundraising and shops:

- **Donation Centre:** Sort, prepare and distribute donated items to our shops
- **Shops:** Help on the shop floor with customers, or behind the scenes sorting stock
- **eBay:** Research, photograph and list collectable or valuable items for sale online
- **Events and collections:** Support fundraising events and bucket collections
- **Stamps:** Sort donated stamps for sale in our shops

Every role matters – and you'll always get training and support to feel confident in yours.



Your Volunteer Journey

Getting started: your induction

- **General Induction:** An introduction to St Luke's and how we work. You'll need to attend before or within your first three months.
- **Role Induction:** Training specific to your role, led by your supervisor.

Checks you may need:

Some roles that involve direct patient contact need a DBS check (criminal record check). This is free, and our team will guide you through it.

Training and development:

- All volunteers complete essential training (e.g. fire safety, manual handling, equality and diversity).
- Retail volunteers can access extra modules such as customer service and visual display.

Keeping safe:

Your safety, and that of patients and visitors, is a priority. You'll learn what's needed during induction. If you spot anything unsafe, please inform your manager or any member of staff immediately

References and paperwork:

If you would like to volunteer at the Hospice, we will require two references before you start. These are kept securely on your record and deleted six months after you leave.

Dress code:

As a volunteer, the way you present yourself helps create a welcoming and reassuring environment for everyone you meet. Please wear clean, comfortable clothing that is appropriate for your role. For positions involving patient contact, we will provide clear guidance on uniforms.

Equally important is personal hygiene. Freshly laundered clothes, tidy appearance, and good personal hygiene not only ensure your own comfort but also help others feel at ease. A neat presentation shows respect for those you support, your fellow volunteers, and the wider team, and it helps reflect the high standards of care we all aim to provide.







How we recognise volunteers:

We're proud of our volunteers and celebrate your contribution:

- Service badges after 5, 10, 15, 20, 25 and 30 years
- Summer and Christmas parties where you can meet staff, trustees and fellow volunteers
- Special events during Volunteers' Week every June

Attendance: what to do if you can't make a shift

We rely on you to keep to your agreed-upon shifts. If you are unable to come in, please notify your manager as soon as possible so they can cover your role. If you're unwell, especially if your role involves patient contact, call your manager directly.

References for you:

After six months of volunteering, we can provide you with a reference.

If you leave:

If you decide to stop volunteering, please let your manager or the Volunteering Team know. We'll be sad to see you go – and grateful for all you've given.

Confidentiality and respect

Confidentiality: keeping information private

In your role you may learn private information about patients, families, staff, volunteers or supporters. This could include health details, personal circumstances, or anything shared in confidence.

We require you to:

- Keep this information to yourself
- Never share it outside the hospice
- Ask your manager if you are unsure what is confidential

You'll be asked to sign a Confidentiality Agreement when you start.

Your personal data:

The details you provide when applying are kept securely and used only staff. We follow the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR to protect your information.

Equality, diversity and inclusion:

St Luke's is committed to welcoming everyone. We want volunteers, staff, patients and families to feel respected and valued, whatever their background, culture, faith, age, gender, sexuality or ability.

As a volunteer, you play an important part in this. Please:

- Treat everyone with dignity and respect
- Help us create a welcoming, supportive environment
- Speak to your manager or the Volunteering Team if you ever feel concerned about discrimination or unfair treatment



Good to know: Everyday practicalities



Inpatient Unit:

Our inpatient unit has been running since 2000. It provides round-the-clock nursing and medical care, as well as support for families.



Wellbeing Service:

This team includes therapists, social workers and admin staff who help improve the wellbeing of patients and families.



Shops:

We run 16 charity shops, which raise vital funds and spread awareness. Shops sell donated clothing, books, homeware, music, toys and sometimes specialist items like furniture or designer labels. Each shop has a manager and assistant manager, supported by volunteers.



Parking:

- Hospice: Spaces are available at the front of the building. Please avoid double parking, as patients need easy access.
- Shops: Check local parking rules before your shift.



Fundraising:

Events such as walks, skydives and concerts, along with donations, gifts in wills, and our hospice lottery, all fund our care. Volunteers are essential, from marshalling at events to signing people up for the lottery.



Fire alarms:

Each site has alarms which are tested regularly. At the hospice, the alarm is tested on Tuesday mornings. You'll be told during induction what to do if the alarm sounds.



Facilities:

All shops have bathrooms and refreshment facilities for volunteers. The hospice has a staff dining room with hot and cold meals available (orders by 10.30am).



Personal belongings:

Some shops have lockers. Ask your manager where best to store coats, bags or umbrellas.



Your volunteer badge:

Always wear your ID badge when volunteering. It's required for building access at the hospice, and retail volunteers should wear theirs on shift.



Role descriptions:

Every volunteer role has a short description of tasks and purpose. Duties may change over time, but always by agreement with you.



Emergency contact details:

We need up-to-date emergency contact details for all volunteers. Please let the Volunteering Team know if anything changes.



Expenses:

If you need to claim out-of-pocket expenses, keep your receipts and submit them to your manager for approval.



Insurance:

Volunteers are covered by St Luke's insurance while doing agreed activities. You're still expected to take reasonable care of yourself, others and property.

Contact the People Team

If you need help or have a question:

Email: volunteering@stlukes-hospice.org

Phone: 020 8382 8057

Write: HR Department, St Luke's Hospice,
Kenton Grange, Kenton Road, Harrow, HA3 0YG

St Luke's Hospice, Kenton Grange, 385 Kenton Road, Harrow, HA3 0YG

t: 020 8382 8000 e: info@stlukes-hospice.org

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