

News

For supporters of
St Gemma's Hospice
Autumn/Winter 2024

**Like my
second family...**

Read Andrew's story inside



**Here for you and your family,
7 days a week, 365 days a year**



**St.
Gemma's
Hospice**

st-gemma.co.uk

0113 218 5500



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donation**



Kerry Jackson steps down as Chief Executive after 14 years

Kerry Jackson OBE recently announced her intention to step down as Chief Executive of St Gemma's Hospice at the end of the year.

Philomena Corrigan, Chair of the Board of Trustees at St Gemma's Hospice said: "I would like to thank Kerry for her incredible contribution to the charity over 14 years. Kerry has led the organisation with an unwavering commitment to delivering the highest quality palliative and end of life care, education and research. Her focus has always been on making a difference to the lives of patients and their families and ensuring that the Hospice's services are accessible to anyone who needs them.

Under her transformative leadership, the Hospice has flourished achieving an outstanding CQC rating (twice), ranking in the top tier of the best companies to work for, and becoming the world's first University Teaching Hospice.

Kerry has been an important part of the Hospice's history and we are grateful for all she has achieved. We wish her well for the future."

Kerry said: "St Gemma's means so much to me personally and professionally and it has truly been an honour and privilege to lead this amazing charity since 2010. Now feels like the right time for me to pursue other opportunities and for St Gemma's to appoint my replacement to lead the Hospice into the next chapter."

We look forward to introducing you to our new Chief Executive over the coming months.



Hospice funding for the future

There has been a lot in the news lately about funding for hospices across the UK and calls for more sustainable government funding.

Due to inflation and rising costs, many hospices are struggling to make ends meet and some are even having to reduce their services and staffing levels which is unthinkable.

Thankfully, St Gemma's is not in this position but we stand with hospices across the country to campaign for a fairer and more robust funding model. St Gemma's receives around 30% of our funding from the NHS (via the Integrated Care Board) towards our running costs, with the remainder of our income raised by you, our remarkable and generous community.

It isn't right that vital end of life care and support relies so heavily on the generosity of our communities to continue providing the majority of our vital services. Your ongoing support ensures we can provide care today, tomorrow and in the years to come. We won't ever take this for granted and need your support more than ever. Thank you.

You can read Kerry's blog here on our website:
www.st-gemma.co.uk/kerry-jackson-funding

Four decades of dedication

St Gemma's has been an important part of the Leeds community for over four decades. This summer we were proud to mark some significant milestones.

In August our charity shop in Harehills celebrated its 40th birthday.

The wonderful team of staff and volunteers came together for this special occasion, including our remarkable shop manager Kathleen, 80, who has worked in the shop since it first opened in 1984.

Over the past four decades, the shop has raised millions of pounds to support patient care whilst being a valued and integral part of the Harehills community.

Meanwhile in Wetherby, volunteer Olivia (pictured right) was presented with her 45-year long-service award and was joined by fellow volunteers past and present to celebrate.

Olivia has been supporting St Gemma's in our Wetherby shop since it first opened, and previously at the Hospice with fundraising events and tombolas. She loves volunteering and says it keeps her active.



Interested in becoming a volunteer?
All our current vacancies can be found at
www.st-gemma.co.uk/support-us/volunteering

Warmly welcomed into the Rothwell community

We recently celebrated the opening of our 26th St Gemma's charity shop in Rothwell. Laura Speight, Head of In-Patient Care was there to cut the ribbon and greet the hordes of excited customers.

Shop Manager, Julie, said: "The welcome we've received has been amazing and we would like to say thanks to everyone in the local community for their kindness. Every day, people are shopping, donating fantastic items, or generously offering to volunteer.



It's a bright, inviting store with a wide variety of bargains, designer pieces, and accessories, plus plenty of parking right outside. Please pay us a visit when you're in the area. We are next door to Morrisons."

All profits from our charity shops go directly towards supporting the vital work of the Hospice in your area.

In the past year, 123 people from Rothwell were referred to St Gemma's Hospice services.

Supporting patients and their families

St Gemma's Hospice would not exist without you, our incredible and loyal supporters. Your donations and fundraising make every day count for local people living with a terminal diagnosis and their families.

Here's how you can make a difference over the coming months...

Buy your Christmas cards

Our beautiful and exclusive range of cards are now on sale. Buy your cards from St Gemma's this year and unlike many of the charity cards you'll find on sale in supermarkets, 100% of the profits from our cards directly support the work of the Hospice.

Give a Charity Shop Gift Card

Why not give a gift card this Christmas. The popular Charity Shop Gift Cards are available to buy and spend in our stores. So you can support sustainable fashion and St Gemma's in one transaction!

Donate to our Christmas Appeal

We know that Christmas can be an especially difficult time for our patients and their families. Your donation will help care for those facing their last Christmas, making sure they receive the best possible support, tailored to their wishes.

£10 could help a patient staying at the Hospice to have a festive meal with their loved ones

£50 could provide specialist support to a child missing their loved one this Christmas

£250 could fund a visit from our Community team to enable a patient to spend Christmas in the place they most wish, their own home



24 October Leeds Big Sleep – AMT Headingley Stadium

Spend a night sleeping out on the terraces at this iconic venue while supporting three local charities that support Leeds' most vulnerable communities. All sponsorship raised from this event will be split between St Gemma's, St George's Crypt and the Leeds Rhinos Foundation.



30 November St Gemma's Winter Ball New Dock Hall at the Royal Armouries

Join us for an evening filled with glitz, glamour, delicious food and fantastic entertainment. Tickets are selling fast this year, so reserve your seats today! This event is generously sponsored by Skopes Menswear.

5, 6 and 7 December Christmas Tree Sales

Our famous Christmas tree sale will take place at the Hospice once again. We will have a range of beautiful, quality trees in various sizes, all at very competitive prices. No need to reserve your tree this year, just turn up on the day to select your super spruce!

14 December **Park Run** **Santa Dash Takeover**

Join fellow Santas at a number of Park Runs on Saturday 14 December. Dash your way through 5km in your favourite festive attire, knowing that every step you cover helps us to continue supporting local people.

8 December **Light up a Life at the Hospice**

Join us at the Hospice for this poignant service to remember and celebrate your loved ones. To dedicate a light on our trees to someone special, make your donation now. You will also be able to follow the service online.

12 December **Light up a Life at Immaculate Heart church**

Our local church Immaculate Heart of Mary will be hosting a special Light up a Life service. This remembrance service is open to anyone who wishes to attend and you will be invited up to light a candle in memory of your loved ones.



Challenge yourself in 2025

- 5-9 March - Northern Lights Trek to Iceland
- 25-28 April - London to Paris Cycle
- 11 May - Leeds Marathon & Half Marathon
- 21-22 June - Total Warrior & Junior Warrior
- 11-21 September - Kilimanjaro Trek

9-13 January 2025 **Treecycle** **your Christmas tree**

A simple, green and charitable way to dispose of your old Christmas tree! Make a donation to St Gemma's and our tree-mendous team of volunteers will collect and recycle your tree.

Lottery winner

Play our weekly lottery and be in with a chance of winning £2,000 every single week – along with 200 other cash prizes. Plus there's a rollover that can reach as high as £25,000! Congratulations to Vicki who won the big prize recently. She said: "I have been playing the lottery for 3 years, in memory of my Auntie who was cared for at St Gemma's. I never thought I would win, I can't believe it. All my friends are now signing up to play! I'm going to spend it on a holiday and maybe put some towards the garden."



Thank you for supporting St Gemma's care and making a difference.

Get In Touch

Donate: 0113 218 5555

Events: 0113 218 5559

✉ fundraising@st-gemma.co.uk

🌐 www.st-gemma.co.uk/support-us

Lottery: Freephone 0800 316 0645

Volunteering: 0113 218 5193



Behind the scenes

St Gemma's Hospice is already known for providing expert care and support to local people and their families. But it is often the work that quietly goes on behind the scenes that makes such a difference to our patients, their families and visitors. Here are some of the stories that you may not often hear about...

Growing our own

The gardens at the Hospice are truly spectacular and our amazing team of staff and volunteers work hard all year round to keep them looking their best. This year, thanks to local company S9 Communications, we have installed a new water feature as part of a new accessible garden and the vegetable patch planted last year is really coming into its own. This batch of rhubarb was harvested recently and gardener Nathan delivered it straight to our chefs, ready to be enjoyed by patients, visitors, staff and volunteers. It doesn't get much fresher than that!



Putting research into practice

St Gemma's was the first ever accredited University Teaching Hospice. The Hospice's Academic Unit of Palliative Care trains health professionals from across the city, runs in-person and online palliative care training courses for professionals, and carries out research, the results of which are used to improve patient care. Caroline works across the Hospice to train the clinical teams on any new developments. In this session she is working with nurses on the In-Patient Unit to bring them up to date on some latest techniques.




Sweet gestures

Liz worked at St Gemma's Hospice many years ago but this year she was referred to St Gemma's for end of life care. Liz said: "They aren't just supporting me - they are looking after my mum and dad, my brother, my husband and my beautiful sons with compassion, understanding and genuine kindness. It's not just the clinical teams, it's the whole team. We have been able to enjoy time in the beautiful gardens, we have sat in the Hospice Bistro and had amazing family Sunday roasts. The chef even baked me my favourite cake, which was just so thoughtful. These small acts of kindness go such a long way."

After several weeks at the Hospice, Liz died peacefully, surrounded by her family. She was 42 years old.





I don't go to the Hospice to die, I go to live...

When Andrew was diagnosed with terminal cancer a few years ago, he felt scared and alone. Four years later Andrew is living his 'best life' thanks to the support of the St Gemma's team.

Andrew told us: "What can I say about St Gemma's? I can't praise them enough. The whole team have helped me come to terms with my illness, supporting me every step of the way.

People think hospices are just a building where you go to spend your final days. They couldn't be more wrong. I have been admitted to their In-Patient Unit on four occasions now – and leave feeling revived.

The team there are first class - they provide skilled care and support around the clock. Last time I was there, I was too active to stay in bed. I love nature, so I spent hours in the gardens with the gardening team and picked up some new skills! I fed the fish in the pond and befriended a crow who would hop onto my patio every day at the same time. The chefs even cooked my favourite Caribbean food – it was just incredible, they do anything for you. It's like a 5-star hotel and you are treated as an individual.

Now I'm at home with my family and I have regular visits from my St Gemma's specialist nurse, Juliet. We talk about everything and she is my lifeline, she does a brilliant job. They have some amazing therapists, like Chrissy, who come and see me too and they help me with all kinds of things from arranging equipment to helping manage my symptoms and making me more comfortable. It's all these people working together that makes St Gemma's so special. It's like they have all been hand-picked, they are brilliant."



“

The whole team feel like my second family and I could not have coped without them. We should all be thankful to have St Gemma's in our community. They are the best thing since sliced bread!

A lasting legacy

St Gemma's is only here thanks to the dedication and support of people in Leeds for well over four decades. The legacy of that dedication is a Hospice firmly rooted in the community that will continue to care long into the future.

Sister Anne's legacy

We are saddened to announce that Sister Anne Hammersley (pictured below) passed away peacefully at the Hospice in July, surrounded by her loved ones. A founding member of the Hospice and the Sisters of the Cross and Passion, Sr. Anne played an integral role for many years.

St Gemma's Chief Executive Kerry Jackson said: "Her insight and dedication were incredible and she will be missed. I feel honoured that St Gemma's was part of her life right to the end, and that she was comfortable, where she wanted to be, surrounded by people she loved, and in the place she gave so much to during her life. May she rest in peace."

Volunteer Stewart Manning added: "I did not know you Sr Anne but you have left a wonderful legacy in St Gemma's Hospice which has inspired a generation of volunteers like myself and will continue to inspire in the future."



Rosemary's lasting gift

We are always humbled by the generosity of supporters like Rosemary. For decades, she has supported St Gemma's through donations, sponsorships, raffles, and filling home collection boxes with loose change. We were honoured earlier this year when Rosemary remembered us with a gift in her Will.

Her donation of **£5,000** will ensure we can continue the work she admired and supported throughout her life. This generosity could cover 20 home visits for patients, aiding local people during their toughest times.

Thank you, Rosemary, for supporting St Gemma's in this special way.

If you would like to leave a lasting gift like Rosemary, visit www.st-gemma.co.uk/yourlegacy to find out more.

1 in 5 of our patients receives care thanks to gifts in Wills.

Write or update your Will this October

Make a Will Month returns, offering you the chance to have your Will written this October with local solicitors who are waiving their usual fees. Their donated time and expertise will help raise funds for the Hospice. Every donation to St Gemma's during Make a Will Month provides essential care and support to patients and families in need.

Tony's legacy

In 1988, Tony established the Pony Club, an innovative fundraising initiative that significantly supported the Hospice's growth during our early years. Members contributed £25 a year (a "pony"), providing crucial regular income to help us build a strong foundation for the future.

Though Tony passed away last year, we want to honor his impact and the lasting legacy he created for St Gemma's, as the Pony Club continues to garner support today.

Thank you, Tony, for your significant contribution to patient care.

For more information, visit www.st-gemma.co.uk/makeawillmonth or call 0113 218 5555.