

Autumn 2022



Celebrating 30 years

Connected 

St. Michael's Hospice Newsletter



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**Reindeer Run is back!**  
Full details on the back cover



**A day in the life of our  
Director of Nursing**

# Welcome



Iain Cameron

**I would like to start my message with acknowledgment of the death of Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II. Our country's mainstay and source of great comfort may be gone, but her legacy is enduring. At times of shock and sadness things may feel that they are passing us by, as we look on. Sometimes it is essential to stop and appreciate the smaller things that are often so important. These short updates that I write are a great opportunity to do just that.**

Hopefully you would have already heard about the refurbishment to our Inpatient Unit which happened during the summer. I was immensely proud of the clinical teams for working together to continue to provide our services in the community, whilst the process of peeling back 30 years was completed to provide a modern, but still warm and welcoming, environment for those in our care. The major work is now complete and in the coming months we will begin the remaining phases of work.

I am especially pleased to announce the launch of our new day services which will focus on the wellbeing of patients and families through a wide range of activities. As part of this, we open our doors each Friday morning to welcome everyone to drop in for some coffee, cake and an opportunity to speak with members of our team. It's great to see patients, loved ones and supporters come together each week bringing a real community feel to the Hospice. Day services are aimed at supporting people earlier on their journey of care, and we hope that we will increase the number of those we care for significantly through this programme.

The hot topic for us all currently is the economy and cost of living. As a small local charity, funding our services will always be

a challenge and we are reliant on people like you to help fund 85% of the services we provide. Without doubt, over the coming months and years, we will need you more than ever. I personally get a great deal of pleasure from speaking to so many of you, be it at events, such as our Moonlight Walk, or when visiting our wonderful retail stores that are vital in generating the financial support we so desperately need.

There is one last piece of news to report and that is our charismatic Chairman, Andrew Chancellor, will be retiring in November. Andrew has been a Trustee for over 10 years, and I have worked closely with him since 2018 as Chief Executive. I would like to publicly recognise Andrew's dedication and commitment to St. Michael's and wish him the very best for the future.

As I mentioned at the beginning of this piece, time is precious, and all those involved in Hospice care, providing or receiving, know that more than most. Thank you so much for the support you give us. Without this, we wouldn't be able to have the time to do those small, but no less significant acts that make a real difference to people's lives.

**Iain Cameron**

Chief Executive



Philippa Aslet

# Update from Philippa Aslet

**It is great to be able to write the Newsletter update, which for me is the first. Having joined the Hospice in December I have been overwhelmed by the welcome from the clinical and non-clinical teams alike. Dr Jemma Storrar and I now work closely together, along with teams both at St. Michael's and the wider healthcare system, to ensure that we are continuing to deliver the highest standards of palliative and end of life care to the residents of north Hampshire.**

Where to start as we have had some busy months. COVID remains a challenge in any healthcare setting and we continue to review the guidance regularly. Currently we are enjoying a break from wearing masks in the Hospice building but we are aware that this may need to change. As and when the guidance changes then practice here will follow suit. The now familiar "Hands, Face, Space" remain the mainstay of reducing the risk of infection with COVID.

All 10 beds on the inpatient unit have remained open bar the 2-week refurbishment. The refurbishment has had a big impact and makes the unit look more open and spacious. We are looking forward to the next phase of upgrade to the sanctuary, relatives' and family rooms.

The Turner Centre has now been returned to the Hospice, after providing essential space to the hospital during autumn & winter COVID pressures. Paul Hutton has taken up a secondment post to set up our day services. He will be driving the development of the services which we know can improve the wellbeing and quality of life of our patients



and their loved ones. This will look quite different from previous day services, as our aspiration is to increase the reach in terms of the numbers of patients that access St. Michael's.

Now that COVID poses less of a threat, the bereavement coffee mornings are back and attendance at our weekly Friday coffee morning is gradually increasing. Other services such as Hospice at Home have been busy recruiting and have appointed a new nurse who will lead on the heart failure, palliative and end of life care with Dr Michael Partridge. This will enable us to provide timely responsive care to this group of patients. One of our priorities is to improve and develop the Hospice at Home service and we hope to be able to say more about that in the next edition.

## Philippa Aslet

Director of Nursing

[philippa.aslet@stmichaels hospice.org.uk](mailto:philippa.aslet@stmichaels hospice.org.uk)

# A day in the life of our Director of Nursing

**8am.** I aim to arrive before 8 most mornings, earlier if I am needed clinically, to catch up with night staff on the inpatient unit (IPU). I check in with the nurse in charge, get updated with any issues or concerns, and pick up a hand over sheet. I then touch base with the community hub and therapy team. Then a very important coffee! Assuming all is well, I have a first check of emails.

**9:00 am.** I attend the online IPU handover meeting. Representatives from all departments and hospital teams discuss any calls overnight and plan the admission of patients. All concerns are raised, everyone has a voice and a role to play in ensuring holistic, patient-centred care.

**10 am.** On Tuesdays we have our morbidity and mortality meeting; care doesn't stop after a patient dies. We review the end of life care and identify the bereavement needs of all patients and their families. Then it's the MDT (multidisciplinary team) meetings which involve the wider palliative care service; hospice, community, hospital, nurses, doctors, consultants, therapists and counsellors.

**11:30 am.** I either go back to urgent emails and admin or I go to the IPU. I like to spend time with patients and their families, I am a nurse first and last. My red uniform marks me out when I am on the ward. I feel it is important that I am visible to patients and staff. I can't provide the level of bedside care that the IPU team do but it remains a privilege to be a nurse.

**Lunchtime:** I try to take lunch. Doesn't always happen but welfare is important for all of us. And, of course, another coffee.

**Afternoons** – less predictable. My role involves developing relationships with healthcare partners, so I might be meeting with community, primary care, GPs, commissioners, etc. I link with NHS hospices as well as being part of a network of independent charity hospices. Sharing information improves the way we work together and ultimately improves patient care. I have regular 1:1s with my team leads and our Chef, food is so important at the Hospice. We have regular senior leadership, governance, medicines management, and audit meetings among others. I am lucky to work closely with Medical Director Dr Jemma Storrar and we touch base most days. Meetings are a vital part of the open culture and teamwork at St. Michael's.

**4:30 pm** Back to the joy of emails, paperwork and admin. Oh and another coffee, decaff now!

**6pm.** I check in with the nurse in charge of the ward and Hospice at Home before heading home. Hospice work is rewarding but also challenging so a good life-work balance is very important. We all need down time to enable us to be at our best.



# Inpatient Unit Refurbishment



Before

**In July of this year, the Hospice undertook vital work to its inpatient unit (IPU).**

The work was required to bring the flooring in the corridor areas up to required infection control standards and the Hospice took the opportunity to get other upgrades done to the unit. The lighting was totally changed to more energy efficient spotlights, redecoration was completed, and soundproofing was added to corridors and some of the busier working spaces.

This refurbishment was planned prior to COVID in 2020 but postponed due to the pressure for beds the virus caused on the healthcare system. With the incredibly tight timescale it was critical that every aspect of the refurbishment was meticulously detailed to avoid delay. Despite a few challenging moments everything proceeded according to schedule.

**"There has been a real energy around the Hospice. After just 14 days, and a full refurb, we welcomed patients back to the IPU again. Our values are PRIDE, and that's certainly what I am feeling,"** Iain Cameron Chief Executive said.

**"Thank you to everyone who has supported us, this is a huge team effort, and I am extremely grateful. These changes, which would not have been possible if it weren't for our amazing supporters, will aid our staff for many years to deliver high quality, specialist, palliative care to our patients and families."**



Before



Before



The new corridor onto the IPU After



The new IPU corridor

After



The new reception desk

After



Before



After

The Hospice was assisted by the support of the wider healthcare services with hospices in Winchester and Andover stepping in where IPU care was needed. St. Michael's IPU staff worked in the community to increase the capacity of our Hospice at Home team.

Chris Griffiths, Director of Transformation, is passionate about the transformation process.

**"The refurbishment project was an exceptional opportunity to really improve the environment in which patients are cared for. The IPU team worked together with community colleagues to ensure our exceptional care was delivered to patients in their homes. With the additional capacity we were able to provide a 24hr a day phone line manned by specialist clinical staff to provide support to patients and families."**

Chris was also very grateful to those who came in to complete the work.

**"It was a privilege to project manage this truly transformational piece of work. Anyone who knows the Hospice will understand the need to undertake this work."**

We had incredible support from all the trades who assisted us with the work. Everyone understood how important it was that the work was finished on time and worked very hard and with great professionalism. I would like to thank our patients and families for their understanding and support during the refurbishment process. I must also acknowledge the incredible clinical team who had to relocate from offices impacted by the refurbishment. This was a huge logistical challenge but demonstrated how teamwork can overcome adversity while they continued to provide enhanced specialist care to patients. We have further phases of essential works scheduled for later in the year, but happily these will not impact our ability to deliver patient services."

The Hospice will now move on to the next phases of its upgrade schedule with a complete refurbishment of its family rooms, further improving the environment for patients and families, but this work will be carried out with no disruption to the care it provides.

# Retail store anniversaries

**Not only is the Hospice celebrating a big birthday this year, but three of our shops have also had anniversaries.**

In July, our South Ham shop celebrated 20 years of being open and the £2 million they have donated to the Hospice in that time. Chief Executive Iain Cameron came along to cut the cake and pull the prizes for the prize draw which the store had organised. Store Manager Jane Fraser told us "South Ham is very much a community shop. I've met some lovely people in my time here and without the volunteers my job would be impossible."



**Sylvia Nelson**

After the day, we caught up with Sylvia Nelson who has been volunteering at the shop since it opened having previously been volunteering at the Brighton Hill, Alton and Overton shops. Sylvia told us she started volunteering when she had time on her hands following retirement and the death of her father who she had been caring for.

"Not much has changed over the 20 years but that the number of customers and donations had definitely gone up," she told us. And what keeps her coming back? "There's nice staff, nice customers and nice

**Brighton Hill Managers Janice, Nikki and Trish**

volunteers." That sounds like a pretty good recipe for a happy working place to us.

The next birthday to come along was 25 years for our Brighton Hill store. The support of the amazing community around the shop has led to nearly £5 million from the shop being donated to the Hospice in that time!

Coming up in December will be the 30th anniversary of our oldest shop, the Chineham branch. Chineham also has a loyal group of shoppers and has been able to donate over £5million to the Hospice since opening!



**South Ham**



**Chineham**

Thank you to everyone who shops in our stores. These numbers show the impact of all those purchases, every 50p book and £5 dress really does add up. Of course, all of these funds don't just come from the wonderful people who shop in our stores but also from the donations we receive. Thank you for all your wonderful donations over the years.

# Our Furniture store

**While our Furniture store isn't celebrating a big anniversary this year, we certainly think it is worth shining a light on the amazing fundraising that happens in the shop.**

Opened in 2010, the store has been managed by Marc Redstall for the last 7 years who, along with his long-serving assistants Max Bowen and Phil Mortimer, has managed to increase income in most years.

In just 12 years since opening, the store has raised over £3 million for the Hospice and while the pandemic closures had a devastating effect on income, our 3 strongest weeks, where **we exceeded £10K in a week**, have all come since reopening.

Marc and the team couldn't raise those sums without a fantastic team of volunteers who work in the store and deliver and collect items from all the other stores.

There is also the important work of the store drivers who are responsible for collecting and delivering items across north Hampshire.



**Marc Redstall**

**They also play an important role in inspecting furniture before accepting it as a donation.** Without this inspection we would have to pay to dispose of many items which turn out to be damaged and unsellable.

The most expensive item ever sold was a corner sofa for £1,800 but the most popular items purchased are chests of drawers. The store has a wide range of pre-loved furniture including:

- Beds
- Wardrobes
- Chests of drawers
- Sofas & chairs
- Bookcases
- Dining sets
- Flat Screen TVs and TV stands
- Desks/office furniture
- Sideboards
- Lamps
- Mirrors
- Canvases and pictures
- Vases
- Ornaments
- General bric a brac
- Garden furniture as well
- Wheelchairs and other walking aids

In other words, everything you could need to furnish your home! The store has a popular Facebook page where it posts regular updates on its stock. **You can find it on Facebook by searching SMHFS.**

# Income Generation update

## Dear Supporters,

As you know this year marks our 30th Anniversary. 30 years of making sure that the days our patients have left can be lived to the fullest, creating lasting memories that are filled with warmth, love, compassion, and laughter.

With less than 16% of our funding coming from the Government we rely on our community to help us raise money each year so we can continue being there for local families. It is thanks to our wonderful supporters like you that this is possible. Your support from either giving donations, taking part in fundraising events, supporting our shops, playing our lottery, or leaving gifts in Wills helps fund the care for 8 out of every 10 patients we support. Thank you ❤️

Behind the scenes facilitating this support are our dedicated fundraising and retail teams. Our aim is to make it as easy as possible for you to support us in the way you choose. We also want you to know the difference your generosity and kindness makes to families living with a life-limiting illness.

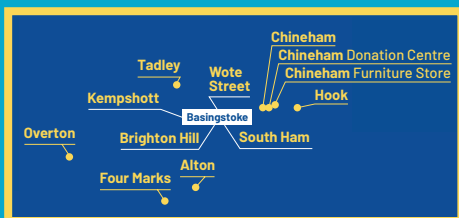


Lorraine Pink

## Retail

If you haven't already, do visit one of our shops. With new stock added every week you are sure to pick up a bargain. We also have our online eBay and Depop shops so you can support us from home.

Our stores are located:



## Fundraising Team

We have some new faces in our Fundraising Team, so we felt this was a perfect opportunity to introduce them. We would encourage you to contact the Supporter Care Team in the first instance to discuss any ideas you might have.

## Lorraine Pink

Director of Income Generation

[lorraine.pink@stmichaelsospice.org.uk](mailto:lorraine.pink@stmichaelsospice.org.uk)  
01256 848848

## Head of Fundraising

Responsible for managing the fundraising team and building and delivering ambitious fundraising plans to grow the charity's income and supporter base.



Sarah Shearman



Daisy Aylward

## Supporter Care Manager

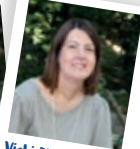
Manages the Supporter Care Team who are the main point of contact for all supporter enquiries, information and supporter care within the team.

## Supporter Care Officers

Provide excellent stewardship and customer care to supporters and potential supporters of St. Michael's Hospice and will be the first point of contact for all supporter enquiries. They ensure that all donations are accurately processed, and all supporters are thanked appropriately.



Vicki Hartj



Vicki Mason



Becky Legate

## Events Manager

Manages, organises and delivers our Hospice led events, ensuring everyone taking part or volunteering is provided with the highest level of supporter care and attention.

## Trust Fundraiser

Responsible for securing gifts from, and building relationships with, charitable trusts and foundations to support the work of St. Michael's Hospice.



Bhanavee Sharma



Natalie Wiltshire

## Community Engagement Manager

Responsible for community, corporate and volunteer fundraising, raising income from companies, organisations, community supporters and groups.

## Individual Giving Fundraiser

Promoting, developing and administering: General donations, Regular Giving, In Memoriam, Legacies, Lottery, Direct Marketing Campaigns and Appeals.



James Young

You can reach the team at

**[supportercare@stmichaelshospice.org.uk](mailto:supportercare@stmichaelshospice.org.uk)**, or on **01256 848848**.

If you have an event you want to put on, you can also simply fill in a form by going on our website and searching for 'fundraise for us.'

# Support your local hospice today

## I would like to make a donation

I would like to give £ \_\_\_\_\_

(please specify your choice of donation)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

## My payments details

☐ I enclose a cheque made payable to St. Michael's Hospice (North Hampshire) **OR**

☐ Please debit from my MasterCard/Visa card, details below:

### Card Number

□□□□-□□□□-□□□□-□□□□

Expiry Date □□ / □□

Please return this form to: St. Michael's Hospice, Basil de Ferranti House, Aldermaston Road, Basingstoke, RG24 9NB.  
OR donate by phone: 01256 848 848 or online at: [stmichaelshospice.org.uk](https://stmichaelshospice.org.uk)

St. Michael's Hospice will keep your details safe and secure. More information on how we use your data can be found in our privacy statement here: <https://www.stmichaelshospice.org.uk/about-us/quality-governance/privacy-notice/>.  
By returning this form, you confirm that you are aware of the privacy policy and accept how St. Michael's Hospice will handle your information. If you have any questions or if you would like to change how we contact you, please call our Support Care Team on 01256 848 8484.

## A big thank you to KatCanDo

We would like to thank KatCanDo who recently donated syringe drivers for our Hospice at Home team. KatCanDo is a local charity who raise money for those treating cancer patients. Since 2015, they have raised over £25,000 for St. Michael's and this year donated five syringe drivers to our Hospice at Home team.

**"Having more syringe drivers for our Hospice at Home team to use means that we are able to treat symptoms quicker and more effectively. Syringe drivers are a vital part of what we do and ultimately ensure our patients are comfortable and symptom free at the end of their lives,"** Lucy Whyte, Hospice at Home Clinical Lead, said.

Kendra Cardy from the charity told us, **"KatCanDo's primary interest and aim is to provide equipment or services that will benefit cancer patients. We have often been welcomed to St. Michael's Hospice over the years and find it very rewarding to know, in this instance, that we have been able to donate money for the purchase of syringe drivers."**



# Community and Corporate Support

Thank you to everyone who has held or attended a fundraising event for St. Michael's Hospice. In these pages, we'd like to highlight some of the wonderful and interesting ways our supporters have been raising money for us and let you know about some upcoming events.

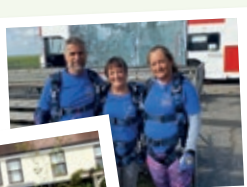


## Skydive

On Saturday 28th of May and Sunday 19th of June a fantastic team of supporters took to the skies with the Army Parachute Association at Netheravon to raise funds for St. Michael's Hospice.

Our Events Manager Becky greeted them there before they undertook a training session and briefing, and then group by group were taken up for their jumps.

The weather was kind and everyone had an amazing experience. We'd like to thank them for their brave endeavour which has raised over £7,000 for the Hospice. We are hoping to hold another Skydive in 2023, so watch this space!



Skydive



Inner Wheel Basingstoke



Fukarwe Charity Ride

## Fukarwe Charity Ride

A huge thank you to Scott Rashbrook and the Fukarwe Tribe MC for hosting a fantastic Charity Ride to support St. Michael's. The event had a great turn out and managed to raise an amazing £1,200. These funds could pay for over 59 hours of nursing at the Hospice, offering support to patients and their families.

## Inner Wheel Basingstoke

We had a wonderful visit from the outgoing president of the Inner Wheel Club of Basingstoke, Alison Fisher, who chose St. Michael's Hospice as her charity for 2021/22. Alison raised a fantastic £750 and also wanted to donate a rose to the Hospice as a lasting memory of their support.

Alison and some of her fellow Inner Wheel members came into the Hospice, to present their amazing donation to us and also to plant the beautiful rose, which was aptly named 'At Peace'.

If your club is looking to support a charity this coming year, why not think of St. Michael's Hospice. We receive less than 16% funding from the government, so we rely on the support of local clubs such as Inner Wheel to continue to provide support for the local community.

# Bridges Donate Car to Hospice at Home Team

Back in April the amazing team at Bridges Estate Agents made the phenomenal gesture of donating a brand new Fiat 500 to our Hospice at Home team. This car is supporting the team in being able to be more agile, getting closer to the goal of providing 24/7 Hospice at Home care to the community of north Hampshire.



The car is fully electric, which is brilliant as it will save the team money on fuel, and helps the Hospice to fulfil its aims around sustainability.

We can't thank the Bridges team enough for their amazing support. If you are a local company and would be interested in supporting the Hospice please let us know.



## Festive fundraising opportunities for your business

We are looking for companies who want to share some festive cheer by getting involved in our upcoming Reindeer Run and Light up a Life events. There are a variety of ways companies can get involved, by entering a team, event sponsorship opportunities, or volunteering. If your company might be interested in supporting St. Michael's Hospice at these events and you'd like to know more, please contact Natalie our Community Engagement Manager.

## Calling all fundraising volunteers... we need you!

We are keen for the Hospice to have a presence at more local community events, so we can raise awareness and generate as much money as possible to fund our services.

We are looking for the following volunteers to represent St. Michael's Hospice at events:

**Community Events Volunteers** – helping us to co-ordinate our attendance at community fêtes, fairs and collections. You need to be able to set-up gazebos and tables etc. and to run fundraising activities like a tombola.

**Community Ambassadors** – attending events held by others in aid of the Hospice. You will need to be happy to attend events on your own or with another volunteer and

have the confidence to talk to small groups or larger audiences about the Hospice. Every event will be different. You might be invited to attend an event as a Hospice representative one time and be asked to say a few words of thanks at a cheque presentation the next.

Both roles are adhoc and you don't have to commit to a set number of hours. You will receive full support and training from the fundraising team or an experienced volunteer before attending events.

If either of these roles sounds like something you would like to do, please do get in touch with us at [volunteer@stmichaelshospice.org.uk](mailto:volunteer@stmichaelshospice.org.uk)

## Reindeer Run

Calling all reindeers to the North Pole! After last year's successful launch of the first ever Reindeer Run, Rudolph and his friends are back for a second year on Sunday 18th December! Put on your antlers and walk, dash, dance and prance along the 3K Reindeer Run route, whilst raising vital funds for St. Michael's Hospice. There will be lots of fun activities such as face painting and yummy refreshments to enjoy when you cross the finish line.

This group festive fun run will be leaving at 9am from Festival Place and heading out to Eastrop Park before looping back round to the finish line to collect the Reindeer Run medal. You may choose to take part to remember a loved one, spend time with friends and family, or simply to have some festive fun. Whatever your reason, we would love to see you.

Your entry fee includes: the cost of staging the event, reindeer antlers, an exclusive Reindeer Run medal, a fully marshalled route and refreshments.

As well as the main event, we would also love schools and community groups to hold their own mini Reindeer Run! You can choose the date and time of the event and we will provide reindeer antlers, sponsorship packs and everything you need to put on a great Reindeer Run to help encourage fitness, have some festive fun and raise money for your local hospice.



## Anniversary Sunflowers

Our Sunflower Celebration was a huge success in June and has raised over £26,000 for the Hospice so far. A huge thank you to everyone who donated in celebration of a loved one and to those who came to the event.

This year for our 30th Anniversary we had limited edition St. Michael's Hospice metal Sunflowers commissioned locally and created in yellow and gold by Hurstbourne Forge.

Just a gentle reminder that we have a number of Sunflowers dedicated to loved ones that have still not been collected. If you haven't collected yours, please call or email the fundraising team to organise a convenient time to collect. Postage can be arranged for an additional £5.

We still have a few Sunflowers available so if you would like to purchase one for your garden please visit our website or contact the Fundraising team. They really are beautifully made and are a wonderful addition to any garden.

**For information on how you can support St. Michael's Hospice, please contact the Fundraising team on 01256 848848 or email [supportercare@stmichaelsospice.org.uk](mailto:supportercare@stmichaelsospice.org.uk).**



# Volunteering Update



## Service Awards

**Wanda Pincombe**  
30-year award

**Sally Handford**  
28-year award

**Gina Todd**  
30-year award

**Mike Pincombe**  
27-year award

## Volunteer Awards

To coincide with National Volunteering Week at the beginning of June we held a Presentation Afternoon Tea at Sherfield Oaks Golf Club for our very-long service volunteers.

As we celebrate our 30th year it is fitting that we recognise the commitment of the wonderful people who have given their time so freely over many years to support the Hospice.

Two long standing volunteers, Wanda and Gina have been connected to the Hospice for over 30 years; they were both part of the instrumental group that fundraised to build St. Michael's Hospice all those years ago.

# WIN

with your local Hospice Lottery!



[www.stmichaels-hospice.org.uk/get-involved/support-us/lottery/](http://www.stmichaels-hospice.org.uk/get-involved/support-us/lottery/)

**ONLY £2  
A WEEK!**



**18+**

Help us care for local people with life-limiting illness

Registered Charity Number: 1002856

BeGambleAware.org





## Case study: Mia, South Ham shop volunteer

"I started volunteering 3 years ago at the Wote Street shop then transferred to South Ham last year. I wanted to learn new skills, gain experience working in a team and in retail as I like meeting people. The team at St. Michael's are so welcoming, they gave me training on the till, serving customers and sorting donations.

The experience has really given me confidence, enabling me to meet new people and gain valuable experience in retail work and dealing with customers and the public. These are skills that I will benefit from going forward, in whatever I do in my career, and it has given me valuable life skills."

**I value making a difference. It has really helped my mental well-being and enabled me to have a greater sense of purpose."**

If Mia has inspired you to become a volunteer then do get in touch. Over the years I have been asked on many occasions, what makes a good volunteer? I have always answered the same - someone who has the desire to help and support and wants to make a difference.

We have a variety of roles to suit everyone, either in the Hospice, our fundraising department or in our retail stores. In our

stores there are plenty of opportunities to help with different tasks, so there's something for everyone. Our friendly shop staff are on hand to offer any training needed so there is no previous experience required. We also have many ad-hoc roles such as helping at one of our Hospice events or shop collections as a fundraising volunteer.

Volunteering not only makes a difference to St. Michael's, it also benefits the person volunteering who learns new skills, gains confidence and becomes part of a friendly team.

Please do get in touch if you are interested in applying or just would like more information on any of the roles, we would love to hear from you.



Tracy Sandle

## Tracy Sandle

Voluntary Services Manager

[Volunteer@stmichaelshospice.org.uk](mailto:Volunteer@stmichaelshospice.org.uk)

# Val Buckley

and the founding of the  
Friends of St. Michael's Hospice



Val, left, and her sister Diana

The first modern hospice in the UK was St. Christophers in London and it opened in 1967 following the hard work and vision of Dame Cecily Saunders. By the end of the 1980s, two hospices had opened in Hampshire and Phyllis Tuckwell in nearby Farnham.

Around this time, a few local people began to think it was time there was a hospice to serve the community of Basingstoke and North Hampshire. We took the opportunity of our 30th anniversary to sit down with Val Buckley, who was one of those people, to find out more about how St. Michael's began.

**"It was a lot of us including the Mayor at the time, Margaret Weston, Tim Abell, Pennie Came, Hilary de Ferranti, Alan Turner from the rotary, and we all seemed to have the idea around the same time,"** Val told us.

Val's aunt had died in a hospital and while the staff their did the very best they could it was still a terrible death and she knew it could be different.

"There were people like Margaret Weston who were involved in the project to get a hospice built and I thought I could be useful in getting the money together. I got together

a team of 22 girls from all the different villages and we became a fundraising team." Val said.

It's been 33 years since that group formed as the Friends of St. Michael's Hospice and 8 of the team are still active and fundraising.

"It is still recorded in the original minutes," Val told us, "That I said we would only be together for two years! I said we would throw everything at it for two years and once the Hospice was up and running we could disband. We always had fun back then and we still do which is why I guess it is still going."



The first Friends committee

The fundraising target was huge. It was forecast that £1.5 million was needed before the hospice could open and running costs of £500,000 for that first year also needed to be raised.

The current chair of the Hospice board, Andrew Chancellor, joined after a chance meeting with Val. "Our families knew each other a bit but one day we ended up sitting beside each other on a bus going to Wimbledon and she convinced me on route that I should get involved. It wasn't actually a hard sell but she was certainly very persuasive!" Andrew said when he confirmed the story of how he came to be involved.

**"It's incredible what she has done. To think, without her there would be no Friends of St. Michael's Hospice and they raise £100,000 every year."**

Val told us it was true, she definitely has a reputation now for always finding ways to get money from people for the Hospice. "It is so easy to raise money for though," Val revealed. "I think it is the most wonderful place and it is my life now."

Many of the events that were held in those early days are still held today, tennis tournaments, clay pigeon shoots, the Christmas Fair and carol concerts. Val told us how she remembers going to events in those early days and coming home with her shoes stuffed with money! "People would be coming up to me and handing me cash and I didn't want to mix it up with what was in my handbag so I would put it in my shoes and empty it out when I came home. It shows just how much everyone wanted a hospice here."

Asked what her strongest memories are so far, Val talked about a wedding held 20 years ago for Erica, who still attends our motor neurone disease clinic, and of being in a patient's room giving a hand massage when the news about the 9-11 attacks came

on the television. But mostly, she said, it is the kindness, the sympathy and the fun that she remembers and that keeps her still so heavily involved.

**"The funds we generate mean the Hospice can go that extra mile, which is so reassuring for patients and families. The Hospice can teach you how to live those last few precious weeks,"** she said.

Chief Executive Iain Cameron works closely with Val. "I have known Val for over 17 years and what she has given to St. Michael's since before its creation in the early nineties is almost inconceivable. Her complete dedication to hospice care knows no limits along with her unwavering determination to spread the word about our work and generate funds. Since becoming Chief Executive, I have enjoyed many pleasurable phone calls at the break of dawn from Val, making sure everything remains on track and she is aware of the latest developments.

Not many people will have achieved what Val has over the last 30 years, and the community of North Hampshire has a lot to thank her for."

If you would like to get involved with the Friends, there are more details on the Hospice website or you can email, Jane Lyons, Chair of the Friends, at [janelyons@talktalk.net](mailto:janelyons@talktalk.net)



*The Friends celebrate 10 years*

Get involved this December and support your local hospice

St. Michael's Hospice

# Reindeer Run

Sunday 18th December 2022, 9am

Setting off from Queen Anne's Square, Festival Place, Basingstoke, RG21 7BA



**3K  
RUN**

KINDLY SUPPORTED BY:

**festival  
PLACE**  
BASINGSTOKE

**Join us on for a festive family fun run!**

For more information please visit:

[www.stmichaelshospice.org.uk/event/reindeer-run-2/](http://www.stmichaelshospice.org.uk/event/reindeer-run-2/)



*Light  
up a Life*

**Sunday 4th December 2022, 6pm**  
**St. Michael's Hospice, RG24 9NB**

Remember and celebrate the life of someone special by dedicating a star as part of our Light up a Life appeal.

**To dedicate a star to a loved one, please visit:**

**[stmichaelshospice.org.uk](http://stmichaelshospice.org.uk)**

**For more information please call 01256 848848 or email  
[events@stmichaelshospice.org.uk](mailto:events@stmichaelshospice.org.uk)**



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