

# Connected

Winter 2023



ST.MICHAEL'S  
**HOSPICE**  
(NORTH HAMPSHIRE)



## Welcome!

**Welcome to the Winter edition of our Connected newsletter - bringing you the latest news and stories from our Hospice.**

Thank you so much for your support this year. Without our amazing community fundraising, donating, volunteering and raising awareness of our charity, we simply couldn't provide our care.

We know the cost of living crisis is having an impact on everyone - sadly we're not untouched by this. The cost of medical supplies is increasing, and so is the demand for our services. And with the winter now here too, we're depending more on the help of our community. We will weather the storm, but only because of people like you, so thank you.

If you would like to support us in continuing to provide our services, please consider donating to our Winter Appeal. You can do this by visiting [stmichaels hospice.org.uk/Winter23](https://stmichaels hospice.org.uk/Winter23) or calling us on 01256 848848. Thank you.

Get ready to join the festive fun with not one, but two Reindeer Runs happening this December! The Hospice is gearing up for an exciting season and we want you to be part of it. You can choose to participate in our classic Basingstoke Reindeer Run or try out our brand new Reindeer Run in Alton. Don't miss out on the chance to support a great cause, get active and have fun with friends and family! Find out how you can sign up on page 15!

Our annual Light up a Life service is taking place on 10 December, from 4pm in the Hospice grounds. Find out how you can make a dedication to a loved one on page 12 - please make your dedication **by Friday 24 November** to ensure your loved one's name is featured in the event's order of service.



This newsletter is packed with stories and the latest news from the Hospice. See page 3 to read how your support helped make a huge difference to our patients last year!

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# Welcome from Iain Cameron



A warm welcome to our latest newsletter.

I'd like to extend my thanks to you, our amazing supporters. Without your generosity, we wouldn't be able to raise the £14,000 per day needed to deliver our services free of charge to our local community.

Whether you've given your time to help us through volunteering, donated to our shops, taken part in a fundraising event or sent us a kind gift - your support has been invaluable and we cannot thank you enough for being there for our patients.

This newsletter is full of stories and updates from across our Hospice - including a story from our patient, Simon, and a story from Charlotte, whose mum used the Hospice. There's also an update from Jemma, our Medical Director, where you can read all about some of the things that have been happening at the Hospice this year.

I hope you enjoy reading our updates and stories - all of this was made possible thanks to people like you supporting us.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Iain'.

Thank you  
Iain Cameron



**GIVE TO OUR  
APPEAL**

“ Hospices are the most underrated service. It's not until you get into a life-limiting situation that you realise the full range of services they offer. There is a misconception that hospices are where people just go to die, when in fact that is just one small part of it. Hospices like St. Michael's are about celebrating life and we must do all we can to support them and protect the vital care they provide. ”

- Natalie, daughter of Debs (patient)



# Supporting our patients this winter

As winter draws near, you have the power to make a real difference in someone's life. During these cold months, St. Michael's Hospice requires your help more than ever. Your support will enable us to continue providing essential care and support to patients and their loved ones across North Hampshire.

Your generous donations make it possible for us to keep our services running, ensuring that those in need receive the highest quality care. Your contribution, no matter how big or small, will make a lasting impact, and we truly appreciate your continued support.

Together, we can make a positive difference in the lives of those who need it most. Thank you for helping us to make this winter a little warmer for those in our care.

*A donation of £25*



could help fund an hour of time with our Hospice biographer. This time can be used to capture special memories for a patient's loved ones once they have gone. These can range from a bedtime story told by a grandparent to a special message from a father to his family.

*A donation of £40*



could help fund a delicious Christmas dinner for a patient and one of their loved ones spending Christmas Day at the Hospice. We aim to create precious moments, and a festive meal with loved ones can bring patients comfort, joy and a sense of normality.

*A donation of £170*



could help fund our electricity costs at the Hospice for a whole day. The use of electricity is crucial to keep our medical equipment running, as well as to provide basic comforts that our patients and their families need during the winter months.

*A donation of £315*



could help fund a year of maintenance for one of our syringe drivers. The syringe drivers are essential for our medical team to administer medication and pain relief to our patients. Ensuring they are working correctly is crucial.

\*If we are fortunate enough to raise more than required for a particular need, we will spend any additional donations where they are most needed.





# Simon's story

Simon has lived in Basingstoke for more than 36 years. During this time, he was a Science and IT teacher at Brighton Hill, Sherfield School and The King's School.

In 2005, when Simon was 50, he was diagnosed with Motor Neurone Disease (MND) – a rare condition which affects the brain and nerves. After being diagnosed, Simon became a patient with us – attending our MND clinic.

Before coming to the Hospice, Simon knew of it because it was the chosen charity of one of the Tutor Groups that he taught at school.

Simon's been coming to the Hospice as a patient for 13 years, using our Living Well Service and the MND Clinic. Simon has attended the MND Clinic since it first began. **"I see professionals that know what they're doing, the whole MND clinic are more than professional and go above and beyond. Everyone's friendly and compassionate."**

Simon has also used many of the other services we provide including complementary therapies such as massages, aromatherapy, and yoga – all of which are designed to help relieve pain and stress caused by his condition. **"I like coming to the MND clinic because I know I'm in a group of people who are all going through the same thing. That connection is nice. When someone new joins the group, I do my best to make sure they're comfortable and happy. Coming into clinic feels like coming amongst friends, be they patient or professional, they're part of the circuit that I engage with and draw strength from, I hope I bring strength to it too."**

When asked about his experience of the Hospice, Simon said, **"I love it – I mean that. I've been coming here so long I feel like part of the furniture. I couldn't speak highly enough of the knowledgeable staff."**

Simon takes full advantage of the breadth of services provided, including taking part in the 2023 Hawthorne Project. Ten children and ten patients met at the Hospice every week for four weeks. They began by meeting and pairing up, they were then tasked with creating an artistic masterpiece with their partner. At the end of the fourth week, parents were invited to come in and celebrate the artwork and relationships created during the project. Simon said, **"I loved it, the children were great! I usually have such low energy levels so I wasn't going to do it. The prospect of 3 or 4 hours of intense engagement was daunting but with my wife we decided that Tuesday would be empty so that I could take part. In the event, the engagement was two way and very calm."**



Follow us on social media to stay up to date with stories from our staff, patients and their families.





# Hospice news

An update from Dr Jemma Storrar, our Medical Director.

It's been a very busy year, with pressures on our local healthcare - we've helped to relieve some of this by offering an eleventh bed in the Hospice, which was occupied three times earlier this year. We've also had changes to COVID PPE - we now only wear PPE for standard infection control reasons. It has been a welcomed change for staff and patients who at last can see our full face.

## Clinical research

We've embarked triumphantly into our first clinical research project, the CHELSEA II trial, as one of 80 hospices participating. We have a 2-year window to recruit patients and have successfully recruited 50% of the total target already. We're the second highest recruiter in the country and given our modest size, this is quite an achievement. Most significantly, staff involved have realised that participation in research is achievable and not as daunting as it's perceived. Hopefully this will lead to similar activity in the future.

## Family room update

Over the spring we updated the Family Room's decor to be warmer and friendlier, making this a more practical and welcoming space for our patients and their families to relax in. It's really important to us that our Hospice is a home-from-home, and the new upgrades help achieve this.

## Increased demand for our services

We're busier than ever and have seen a 43.8% increase in demand for our Hospice at Home services since 2020/21. Our Patient and Family Support Team are also getting busier and busier - with more people seeking pre and post bereavement support.

## Living Well Service

Our Living Well Service provides a range of sessions to support our patients and their families. We're really happy to see more patients having complementary therapy. It's also fantastic to be running Symptom Management sessions and Pilates sessions for patients. Patients who attend our Crafting sessions produce everything from Christmas wreaths to stuffed elephants and tea light holders - all of which sell very well at our events!

As an independent charity, we can only offer these services to our patients thanks to the amazing support of people like you - thank you so much!



Hospice care isn't a luxury, it's essential and thanks to you, we're able to be there for our patients across North Hampshire. Help us to continue providing essential care by giving to our Winter Appeal. You can do this by visiting [stmichaelshospice.org.uk/Winter23](https://stmichaelshospice.org.uk/Winter23) or calling us on 01256 848848.



# Pets making an impact

We're lucky enough to have two Pets as Therapy dogs, Polly and Sonny, visit our Hospice each week to spend time with our patients, their families and our staff.

Having the companionship of animals can make a big difference to someone's emotional wellbeing. We believe in making our patients feel as comfortable and at home as possible when they're with us, so Polly and Sonny come in and help to bring some companionship.

Polly and Sonny both mean so much to our patients. Sonny visits on Wednesday afternoons, seeing patients in their rooms for a cuddle and fuss. Polly visits on a Friday and spends time on patients' laps - getting love and affection from everyone she meets - including patients' families and staff!

Polly's owner, Lorraine, talked about the impact she sees when she and Polly visit the In-Patient Unit:

**" Polly's Hospice visits bring comfort, cuddles, and companionship to everyone she meets. Her presence is a source of joy for the individuals she visits and stroking her helps ease anxiety while triggering happy memories. Many people find comfort in sharing their experiences with pets, and Polly is honoured to be able to contribute to the wellbeing of those she visits. "**

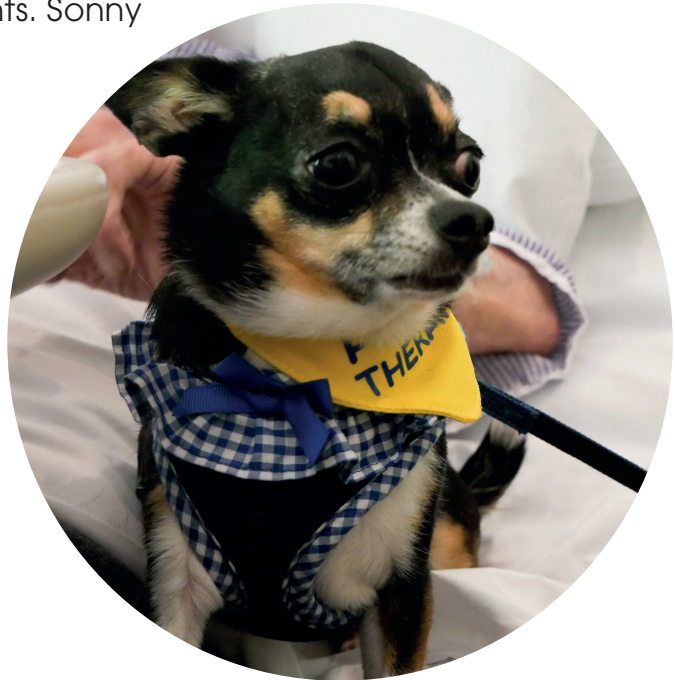
Polly even won our volunteering PRIDE award this year, after staff saw the difference she was making to our patients!

## Horse visits Hospice

We're a nation of pet lovers, and we know how much pets mean to our patients, so it's not a surprise when we see a patient's pet on the In-Patient Unit for visits.

However, in July, a surprise was arranged for one of our patients to be visited by their horse, Target!

We believe in creating memories, and this was certainly a heart-warming memory for everyone involved!





# Memory Tree

Located in the light and welcoming Hospice foyer, our Memory Tree is a beautifully designed sculpture displaying a stunning array of bronze, silver and gold leaves, with a memorial meadow of 10 bespoke Sunflowers at the base.

## What is a Memory Tree?

The Memory Tree is a meaningful way to remember and honour your loved ones.

By dedicating a leaf or sunflower you will not only be creating a lasting tribute to a loved one – you will also be helping other families to create special memories at difficult times.

The loved one you wish to remember doesn't have to have been cared for by us to have their name on our Memory Tree. However, your donation will allow us to continue to provide care and support to those in our community who need us.



## Can we visit the Memory Tree?

You're welcome to arrange a time to visit the tree whenever you need a moment to sit, reflect, and remember.

## How do I make a dedication to a loved one on the tree?

You can choose to make an annual donation for your loved ones Memory Tree leaf, or you can set up a monthly direct debit instead.

You can dedicate a leaf or sunflower to a loved one by visiting: [stmichaelshospice.org.uk/memorytree](http://stmichaelshospice.org.uk/memorytree) or by calling us on **01256 848848**.

Polly Lloyd Webber dedicated a sunflower to her husband, Nick. She told us:

// **We love it and are so thankful.** //



**GIVE TO OUR  
APPEAL**

# Fundraising spotlight

We simply couldn't do what we do without the support of our incredible community. By fundraising in the community, vital funds are raised to help provide our services. Here's just a snapshot of some of the fundraisers that have taken place so far this year:



Sophie, 10, has fundraised for us since she was 4 years old! She recently took on a 100km cycling challenge, raising £215!



Steve is Captain at Sherfield Oaks Golf Club. He took part in a 99-hole challenge for us, and hosted a Captain's Day in aid of us. The two events raised a fantastic £15,000!



The people of Steventon came together to organise a beautiful open garden and bluebell walk in aid of us.



The Village Café, in Old Basing, sold baked goods, teas and coffees in aid of us, to raise funds for a syringe driver!

Thank you to everyone who has worked so hard to raise funds for our charity. Every month, we feature a spotlight on our fundraisers on social media and our website - keep an eye out and let us know if you're taking on any fundraising so we can celebrate you

## Shop with us

Our Christmas cards and gifts are now available in our shops and online!

By purchasing your cards and gifts from us, you'll be helping raise vital funds this winter.

So, head on over to our stores across North Hampshire, or online at

**[stmichaelshospice.org.uk/cards](http://stmichaelshospice.org.uk/cards)** to shop our beautiful range of Christmas cards and gifts.

From Nativity scenes or robins, to Santas and penguins - we have a design to suit everyone's tastes!

**We have a brand new Instagram account - [@ReLovedSMH](https://www.instagram.com/ReLovedSMH)**

Follow us for styling inspiration and charity shopping tips and tricks to make sure you get the most out of your shopping.

If you can't make it to one of our shops, you can shop online on our eBay and depop shops - find out more: **[stmichaelshospice.org.uk/online shopping](http://stmichaelshospice.org.uk/online shopping)**







# A day in the life of Ellie

**Ellie is a nurse in our Hospice at Home team and has shared a day in her life!**

**08:15** - I arrive at the office early for my 08:30 start, make a cup of tea and catch up with my colleagues.

**09:00** - I join a video call with my colleagues in the Community Palliative Care Team, In-Patient Unit and Hospital teams. Here we discuss In-Patient Unit capacity, possible admissions, overnight calls and Hospital admissions and discharges.

**09:15** - I walk over to the Wellbeing Room where I join the wider Community Palliative Care Team to attend a referral meeting. Here we discuss and allocate the patients that have been referred to the palliative service by their GP or Hospital discharges.

**10:00** - Duty calls as a telephone call comes into the Hub from John, who tells me his wife, Dawn, has deteriorated and can no longer get out of bed. After this call, I re-organise my day to prioritise this urgent visit. I then visit Dawn at home, who has deteriorated rapidly, and is very weak and lethargic. We discuss additions of equipment with Dawn and her family to make Dawn comfortable at home. We also discuss her package of care (POC) and conclude that due to the deterioration, Dawn will require visits from carers four times a day.

Usually, I would attend the Multidisciplinary Team caseload review at this time, so my colleague goes on behalf of Hospice at Home.

**12:30** - Once back in the office, I liaise with our Occupational Therapy Team to discuss equipment required for Dawn. After their very helpful input, I use the local equipment service provider to order a profiling electric bed to be delivered to Dawn's home, this will make her more comfortable now she's spending more time in bed.

I call the Continuing Health Care (CHC) to discuss increasing Dawn's POC to support with her changing symptoms. As an advisory service to Primary Care, I email the patient's GP to update them on Dawn's deterioration and request additional medications for an injection that makes up the Just In Case "JIC" medications. This can require additional chasing of prescriptions and medications, ensuring the pharmacy have stock and once these are prescribed, I will need to call Dawn's daughter for her to collect these medications from their local pharmacy.

**13:00** - Time for lunch! The team try to have lunch together if we're all back at the Hospice. During the summer we can usually sit outside and enjoy the lovely weather, sometimes lunch can be on-the-go, so opportunities to sit down together are so valuable.



**13:30** - I check the Teams Message sheet throughout the day to see if there are any calls marked for Hospice at Home. I then call patients or relatives to provide support and advice. Some of these phone calls require visits which my colleagues attend to.

**14:30** - I visit George in the afternoon to replenish his syringe driver, this delivers medications for symptom control. We have been visiting George daily and sometimes he comes to the Hospice for his syringe driver change. We often get patients that need syringe drivers for a few days or up to a week to manage symptoms, then they continue taking oral medications again.

**16:30** - It's now time to catch up on typing up the notes from this morning's patient visits and I reply to emails with an afternoon cup of tea.

**17:00** - We get an urgent call from the family of Dave, who has been struggling with his medications and is now unable to take sips of water. The team are aware Dave has been deteriorating over the last few days and he's been visited by the Community Nurses in the area. Due to the new symptoms, we visit Dave, review, and assess his current situation. We make a phone call to our Hospice at Home Palliative Doctor to discuss the changing situation and we decide a syringe driver is required to support these symptoms, administering vital pain relief medications as Dave can no longer swallow.

The Doctor emails me the syringe driver prescription, which I print off with our portable printer and with the JIC medications already in the house, I connected the syringe driver for Dave. A large part of our job is having difficult conversations with patients and relatives, to acknowledge deterioration and to talk about end-of-life care and preparations for death. This evening, we took time speaking with Dave's family, answering all their questions and discussing what to expect now that Dave is approaching end-of-life and dying.

**20:00** - I hand over our community caseload to the In-Patient Unit night nurses and give them the HUB phone, they will now respond to overnight calls – providing advice and signposting to overnight services. I spend the last hour of my shift catching up on noting, tidying up the office and printing off the handover sheets for my colleagues in the morning, before switching off the computer for the day.

**21:00** - I have a short drive home with the radio on to wind down after a busy day at work.

\*Please note that names have been changed for confidentiality.



Your support helps us care for patients in their homes across North Hampshire. To find out more about Hospice at Home, visit [stmichaelshospice.org.uk](http://stmichaelshospice.org.uk)



*Light*  
up a *Life*



# Dedicate a light to a loved one



**Make a  
dedication**

Remember the life of a loved one this festive season by dedicating a light to them in our Light up a Life appeal.

You can dedicate a light to someone special by visiting [stmichaelshospice.org.uk/light-up](http://stmichaelshospice.org.uk/light-up) or calling us Monday - Friday, 8.30am - 4.30pm on **01256 848848**.

**Join us at our Light up a Life service on Sunday 10 December.**

**Venue:** St. Michael's Hospice (North Hampshire),  
Basil de Ferranti House, Aldermaston Road, Basingstoke, RG24 9NB

**Time:** Arrive from 4pm for a 5pm service

Registered Charity Number: 1002856



# Bereavement support this festive season

We know special occasions can be tough when you're missing a loved one. This festive season, we have several ways you can get support from us if we've cared for your loved one.

We hold Bereavement Coffee Mornings and Walk and Talk sessions - all designed to give you a space to talk, or simply meet with people who are in similar situations to you.

Chris Bagan, Patient and Family Support Lead said:

**Our Bereavement Coffee Mornings and Walk and Talk sessions offer bereaved relatives a welcoming and friendly space to meet and talk with others who are going through a similar situation.**

**We recognise that it can be difficult for bereaved relatives to return to the Hospice for support, but those who do are reassured that they are not alone in their grief and benefit from feeling part of the St. Michael's Hospice community. It doesn't matter how long or recently you have been bereaved, the Coffee Mornings and Walk and Talk sessions are available to all relatives of past patients.**

You can find out more about our family support, Coffee Mornings and Walk and Talk sessions on our website: [stmichaelshospice.org.uk/familysupport](https://stmichaelshospice.org.uk/familysupport)



**FAMILY  
SUPPORT**

## Volunteering your time

As a charity, we rely on our incredible volunteers who give their time to support all areas of our work, from helping in our shops across North Hampshire or assisting at fundraising events, to welcoming families to our Hospice at weekends or providing vital care for our gardens, so our patients and their families can enjoy them.

Our volunteers are AMAZING. Shirley is a volunteer who helps in our Chineham store. Shirley told us: **"If I were to pick one thing that I love most about volunteering, it would be the fact that I feel useful. A supporter thanked me not long ago for the work I do for the arts and craft section in Chineham. She had brought a jar of beads for her daughter to play with as a sensory aid and she loved it."**

We have lots of roles available across our Hospice. If you'd like to give some of your time and skills, to help, and become part of our team, visit: [stmichaelshospice.org.uk/volunteer](https://stmichaelshospice.org.uk/volunteer)



**VOLUNTEER  
WITH US**



# Charlotte's story



Charlotte's mum was diagnosed with Ovarian Cancer and came to our Hospice for care. Charlotte's kindly told her mum's story, and her family's experience of our Hospice.

My mum was in the Hospice on two occasions, the first time being for some respite care and the second time shortly after that for more respite care that actually turned into end-of-life care. She had been diagnosed in the November and her first stay at the Hospice was in the April of the following year. Before coming to the Hospice, I thought it would be dark and depressing, my mum thought that once you entered a hospice you didn't come out alive, which wasn't the case with her first stay.

**When we went to the Hospice, it was a lovely light place and so much nicer than the hospital ward that she had been transferred from.** We really valued the privacy that the individual rooms offered and not having a limit on visitor numbers.

It was my birthday whilst mum was in the Hospice (the day after we found out that mum would be switching from respite care to end-of-life care), so we had a family gathering in her room with some champagne. It was lovely that we were able to do that without worrying about time limits or being told off for there being too many of us! We were lucky in that the weather was nice enough for us to be able to wheel mum out of her room to enjoy the garden sunshine by the pond. I appreciated the cake that was out every day and the board games, my mum still managed to beat me at scrabble even though she was dying!

**Every staff member and volunteer that we encountered were really friendly and nice. I felt like I could turn up any time of day or night and still receive care and support.**

I used the Hospice's Bereavement Support Counsellor after my mum had passed, which really helped me to acknowledge the steps of grieving.

It's been 13 years since my mum passed away. In December, my daughter, husband and I took part in the Hospice's fundraiser – Reindeer Run. It's important to me to teach my daughter about the importance of supporting charities, especially local ones.

The Reindeer Run was great as it was family-friendly, fun and a cause very close to my heart. Although my mum passed a long time before my daughter was born, it's still important that she knows about her and the different places that supported her and the family throughout. The amount raised is a great reflection on the big hole that my mum left in so many peoples' lives.

Charlotte and her daughter raised over £1000 by taking part in our Reindeer Run! If you'd like to take part this year, we have events in Basingstoke and Alton, visit [stmichaelshospice.org.uk/reindeerrun](http://stmichaelshospice.org.uk/reindeerrun) to sign up!





ST.MICHAEL'S  
**HOSPICE**  
(NORTH HAMPSHIRE)



**SIGN UP!**

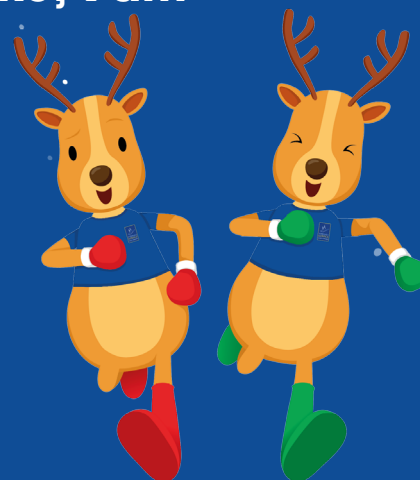
# Reindeer Run!

**Sunday 3 December, Festival Place, Basingstoke, 9am**  
**Sunday 17 December, Alton Rugby Club, 9am**

Join us for a festive family-friendly 3k fun run in Basingstoke and Alton to raise funds for your local Hospice!

Sign up today:

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



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*festival*  
**PLACE**  
BASINGSTOKE



ALTON RFC

# Your impact

Last year, your generosity helped us provide free compassionate care to our patients and their families across North Hampshire. Here's how your support helped us do this:



We need to raise  
**£14,000**  
per day to run  
our services.

Patients  
stayed with us  
an average of  
**9.3 days**



**706**  
Complementary  
Therapy sessions  
were held for our  
patients.

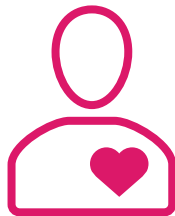
**94%**

of our patients achieved their  
preferred place of death.



**411**

bereavement counselling  
sessions were carried out for  
the families of our patients.



**260** patients  
were admitted to  
our In-Patient Unit  
for care. (Including  
day cases.)

**694**  
Chaplain  
visits.

Hospice at Home received

**13,015**

calls from families  
who needed advice or  
information.

**349**

patients, carers  
and family members  
attended our Living Well  
Services.



Our Hospice at Home team

made **1,867**  
visits to patients in their  
homes.